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ABSTRACT

This annual guide provides information on recommended software programs and multimedia applications for K-12 use. An introductory section describes the evaluation process and lists the highest-rated programs for 1998-99. The program entries are organized by the following subject areas: the arts, early childhood, health, language arts, mathematics, problem solving, reference, science, social studies, student helper, and tools. Each entry includes title, publisher, copyright date, grade level, subject areas, cost, hardware requirements, magazine review citations (if available), a description, applications for diverse learners (if applicable), tips for use, and evaluator comments. A total of 79 programs are listed; 67 of these are new to the guide and 12 are "OTB (Only the Best) Classics." A software publisher directory, interdisciplinary index, and title index are included. (MES)

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ED 432 998

THE ANNUAL GUIDE TO THE HIGHEST-RATED EDUCATIONAL SOFTWARE AND MULTIMEDIA

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THE ANNUAL GUIDE TO THE HIGHEST-RATED EDUCATIONAL SOFTWARE AND MULTIMEDIA

ASSOCIATION FOR SUPERVISION
AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA USA

1998–1999

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Only the Best
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Introduction

Welcome to the 1998-99 edition of *Only the Best: The Annual Guide to the Highest-Rated Educational Software and Multimedia.*

What Is *Only the Best*?

Only the Best is an annual, easy-to-use reference containing information on software programs and multimedia applications that have met *Only the Best*'s stringent criteria for excellence (see the Evaluation Process section). The purpose of *Only the Best* is to provide a quick and easy way for curriculum directors, technology coordinators, librarians, teachers, school administrators, students, and parents to find the highest-rated materials available to meet their needs. By compiling information on the highest-rated materials in one convenient guide, educators are able to sift through the intimidating mass of programs now available and select those that are truly worthy of an *A* grade.

Only the Best has been published annually since 1984 and is now also available on CD-ROM and via the Internet. *Only the Best 1990-98 Compilated Version* on CD-ROM contains up-to-date information on more than 500 titles that were included in previous editions of *Only the Best*. The 1990-99 edition will be available in the spring of 1999.

Only the Best is also available as part of ASCD's new online subscription service, *Select Online*. In addition to featuring *Only the Best*, *Select Online* contains searchable, full-text versions of other ASCD publications such as *Educational Leadership, Education Update*, and the *Curriculum Handbook*. For more information on *Select Online*, please visit our Web site at <www.ascd.org>.

Notes for the *Only the Best* User

Entries in this edition fall under two categories: programs new to *Only the Best* and *OTB* Classics. *OTB* Classics are programs that have been previously featured in *Only the Best* and have now attained Classic status because they have received at least two more "Excellent" ratings from our evaluators (see the Evaluation Process Section). This year's edition features 67 programs new to *Only the Best* alongside 12 *OTB* classics.

OTB Classics are denoted by this symbol.

The two-column format of *Only the Best* makes it easy for readers to use the book for quick reference. The left column contains information such as subject areas and grade levels served, cost, and hardware requirements. The right column holds an in-depth description of the program as well as helpful tips from our evaluators.

Only the Best features an Interdisciplinary Index that allows users to locate programs appropriate for a specified subject area or across the curriculum. An example of the latter is Troll Communications' *First-Start Biography (*see page 65). This program can be used effectively in both social studies and language arts classrooms. The Interdisciplinary Index can be found on page 85.

Applications for Diverse Learners

Only the Best also highlights programs that cater to special needs students. Such programs are indicated by an Applications for Diverse Learners section. This section can be found in the right column between the description and evaluator conclusions. The flexible design of *Only the Best* allows software and multimedia titles, traditionally listed under a special education heading, to be listed within their respective subject areas. To quickly locate titles with features especially appropriate for special needs students, look under "Diverse Learners" in the Interdisciplinary Index.

For more information on programs for diverse learners, please contact the following organizations.

Alliance for Technology Access, 2175 East Francisco Blvd., Suite L, San Rafael, CA 94901. Phone: (415) 455-4575. Internet Address: <http://www.ataccess.org/>

Closing the Gap: Computer Technology in Special Education and Rehabilitation
Internet Address: <http://www.closingthegap.com/rd.html>

ConnSENSE, 249 Glenbrook Road, U64, Storrs, CT 06269-2064. Phone: (860) 486-0171. Internet Address: <http://www.ucc.uconn.edu/~wwwpcse/CSBull.html>

Laureate Learning Systems, 110 East Spring Street, Winooski, VT 05404-1898. Phone: (800) 562-6801. Internet Address: <http://www.llsys.com/>

MASTAC (Massachusetts Special Technology Access Center), 71 Arsenal Street, Watertown MA 02172. Phone: (617) 924-9787. Internet Address: <http://www.ultranet.com/~mastac/>

Software To Go, Gallaudet University, MSSD Box 77, 800 Florida Ave. NE, Washington, D.C. 20002. Phone:(202) 651-5705 (voice/tty) 5109. Internet Address: <http://www.gallaudet.edu/~pcnmpstg/index.html>

Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc. (TESOL), 1600 Cameron Street, Suite 300, Alexandria, VA 22314-2751. Phone: (703) 836-0774

Only the Best 1998-99

The programs listed in this edition of *Only the Best* cover every grade level and content area. However, this year's trend is for the programs to be aimed at the upper elementary/lower middle school grades (3-6) and focused on disciplines associated with science and social studies.

More specifically, a combined 41% of the programs highlighted in *Only the Best* are titles that focus on science and social studies areas. Additionally, 48% of the programs are suited to the needs of 3rd graders, 58% were catered to 4th and 5th graders, and 57% are directed toward sixth graders.

MAJOR CONTENT AREAS SERVED

	1994-95	1997-98	1998-99
Language Arts	10%	17%	16%
Mathematics	10%	15%	14%
Science	20%	15%	23%
Social Studies	24%	15%	18%

GRADE LEVELS SERVED

Pre	K	1	2	3	4	5
14%	27%	40%	39%	48%	58%	58%
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
57%	51%	48%	44%	44%	41%	41%

It is important to keep in mind that all of the programs listed in *Only the Best* cover multiple grades, and some cover the entire K-12 span. Additionally, many of the programs highlighted in *Only the Best* are interdisciplinary in nature and can be used in many different classroom situations (see the Interdisciplinary Index).

OTB in Action

Come see *OTB*! Explore workstations with hands-on previews of software titles from *Only the Best*, the Internet, and ASCD's latest curriculum-related products and online forums. Visit the ASCD Center in the exhibit hall at ASCD's Annual Conference in San Francisco, March 6-8, 1999. For information about the ASCD Center, contact Jayne Osgood, Program Director of Annual Conference, at (800) 933-2723, ext. 5675 or 703-578-9600 ext. 5675; e-mail: josgood@ascd.org. For information about the 1999 Annual Conference, contact ASCD's Service Center at (800) 933-2723, ext. 2 or (703) 578-9600, ext. 2 or visit ASCD's Web site at <http://www.ascd.org>.

A Final Note

We are always looking for evaluators to join us in our quest for identifying outstanding software and multimedia programs. If you are involved with a software evaluation group that might be interested in providing their findings to *Only the Best*, or would like to create an evaluation system within your district, please contact us at (800) 933-2723, ext. 5674 or (703) 575-5674.

We hope that you enjoy this year's edition of *Only the Best*.

Jamie Sawatzky
Editor, *Only the Best*
jsawatzk@ascd.org

The Evaluation Process

Throughout the year, approximately 25 evaluators in the United States and Canada forward the results of their ongoing software and multimedia evaluation efforts to ASCD. These evaluations are assigned a grade ("Excellent", "Good", or "Negative") and are entered into a database. A program is eligible for inclusion in *Only the Best* when it has received

- two "Excellent" grades OR one "Excellent" and three "Good" grades, and
- no "Negative" grades from any U.S. evaluator.

A program is eligible for "Classic" status when it has received two "Excellent" grades after publication in *Only the Best*.

What Are Our Evaluators Looking For?

Although our evaluators are often looking for many of the same features in a program, each evaluation group uses its own set of criteria. For example, *MultiMedia Schools* evaluators base their ratings on such items as ease of installation and general product support. *Children's Software Revue* has established an evaluation instrument that helps the reviewer identify programs that are child controlled, have solid educational content, and contain rich design features such as multiple levels of difficulty and teacher options that are easy to find and use. Evaluators at the Developmental Software Awards include in their criteria such items as depth of graphics, level of interactivity, and age appropriateness of the program.

Most of the evaluators also try to measure the relative value of a program–that is, how much the program costs in comparison to what it can deliver to the user. Evaluators also keep an eye on whether a program meets its advertised objectives and whether a product is appropriate for classroom use.

Because each evaluation group has its own set of criteria, the reviews that we receive are varied in scope. *Only the Best* compiles all of the different evaluations into one easy-to-use guide.

The Evaluators

Alberta Education

The Curriculum Standards Branch of Alberta Education (the Province's department of education) sets high standards for evaluating educational software and multimedia. A three-stage evaluation process is followed. Materials are first reviewed for curriculum fit. If found appropriate, the courseware is evaluated by specially trained independent teachers for instructional design and "tolerance and understanding" criteria. The teachers' conclusions are sent to the appropriate branch for a final judgment on quality and appropriateness to the curriculum and target audience.

In this edition of *Only the Best*, Alberta's ratings of basic, support, and authorized teaching materials are designated "Excellent."

For more information, contact Therese Pavone, Resource Evaluation Manager, Curriculum Standards

Branch, Alberta Education, 11160 Jasper Ave., Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T5K 0L2. Phone: (403) 422-4872. Fax: (403) 422-0576.

American Library Association's "Best" List

Each year, three committees of the American Library Association's Association for Library Service to Children compile lists of notable films, videos, recordings, and microcomputer software. The microcomputer committee selects titles that challenge a student's imagination and intelligence through the effective use of technology. Titles appearing on this list are rated as "Excellent" in *Only the Best*.

This list is presented annually in the April issue of *Booklist* and *School Library Journal*. For more information, contact the American Library Association at (800) 545-2433, or visit their Web site at <http://www.ala.org>.

Baltimore County (MD) Public Schools

Software evaluation committees representing different grade and subject areas evaluate software submitted to them by the district's media processing center. Each committee usually assigns at least three members to evaluate each program. "Excellent"and "Good" ratings directly correspond to those in *Only the Best*.

For more information, contact Thea Jones, Supervisor, Department of Information Technology, 1940G Green Spring Drive, Timonium, MD 21093. Phone: (410) 887-3858.

Binghamton (NY) City School District

Binghamton City School's database of educational software contains programs that have been evaluated by several of the district's most experienced technology users, kid-tested by qualified teachers, and given a subjective rating from 0 to 50. Programs receiving an average rating of 47 to 50 are designated with an "Excellent" rating by *Only the Best* and those with a rating of 43 to 46 are designated "Good."

For more information, contact Doug Green, Woodrow Wilson Elementary School, Binghamton City School District, 287 Prospect Street, Binghamton, NY 13905. Phone: (607) 763-8442. E-mail: dgreen@stny.lrun.com.

Bologna New Media Prize

To recognize the growing significance of children's software, the Bologna Children's Book Fair announced the 1998 Bologna New Media Prize in Collaboration with *Children's Software Revue*, a U.S.-based publication dedicated to the evaluation of children's software. The Prize, awarded annually, was designed to encourage excellence and innovation in children's software products in 13 categories.

A panel of seven leading reviewers of children's software from Europe, the United States, and Asia met in April 1998 to choose the new media prize in 13 categories. Jurors had the following qualifications: an established track record as a software reviewer, the ability to offer impartial and objective opinions

on a range of the latest children's software, a background in education, and direct experience with families, children, and technology.

Titles included on the list of Bologna New Media Award Winners are designated "Excellent" in *Only the Best*. For more information about the Bologna New Media prize, visit their Web site at <http://zippy.tradenet.net/childrenssoftware/bologna/default.html>.

Booklist: Editor's Choice Honors

Throughout the year, *Booklist* magazine includes reviews of software. At the beginning of each year (January 15th), *Booklist*'s software and multimedia evaluators identify the Editors' Choice programs from the previous year. Since 1987, programs selected for this honor receive an "Excellent" rating in *Only the Best*.

Copies of the *Booklist* are available for $4.50 (U.S.) from the American Library Association, *Booklist*, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611. Annual subscription: $65 in the United States and $80 in Canada.

For more information contact the American Library Association at (800) 545-2433, or visit their Web site at <http://www.ala.org>.

California Instructional Technology Clearinghouse

For 14 years, the California Instructional Technology Clearinghouse has been identifying high quality instructional technology resources for grades K-12 in order to help teachers integrate multimedia products into their curriculums. Administered by the Stanislaus County Office of Education, the Clearinghouse evaluates CD-ROMs, diskettes, videos, and interactive videodisc products. All highly recommended programs have been evaluated by at least two K-12 educators from California schools. An exemplary grade from the CITC corresponds to a "Good" rating in *Only the Best*.

The CITC evaluations can be found on the Internet at <http://tic.stan-co.k12.ca.us:80>. For more information, contact John Vaille, Executive Director, California Instructional Technology Clearinghouse, 801 County Center 3 Court, Modesto, CA 95354.

Children's Software Revue

Children's Software Revue issues a bimonthly newsletter for parents and teachers of 3- to 12-year-olds providing information on educational software for all hardware platforms.

Selected programs are submitted for review to one or two families or schools and a staff reviewer. Titles are evaluated using the *CSR* Software Evaluation Form. Software is selected based on the age of children and the type of hardware required. A grade of four and a half stars or higher corresponds to "Excellent" in *Only the Best* and a grade of four stars corresponds to a "Good" rating.

Annual subscriptions to *Children's Software Revue* are available in the United States for $36 (U.S.) from Active Learning Associates at (800) 993-9499.

ConnSENSE

ConnSENSE (Connecticut Special Education Network for Software Evaluation) is an activity of the A. J. Pappanikou Center Technology Lab at the University of Connecticut. The project identifies software especially helpful for students with disabilities, evaluating it for overall quality and specific use in special education and diverse learner programs. Software is evaluated by technology lab staff using an evaluation instrument developed by the project. These reviews are then presented in the *ConnSENSE Bulletin*.

Evaluation results are given alphabetical grades. Programs that receive an *A* are designated "Excellent" in *Only the Best*, and those that receive a *B* are designated "Good."

For more information about ConnSENSE reviews, visit the technology lab at <http://www.ucc.uconn.edu/~wwwpcse/CSBull.html> or contact Chauncy N. Rucker, Director, A.J. Pappanikou Center Technology Lab, 249 Glenbrook Road, U64, Storrs, CT 06269-2064. Phone: (860) 486-0171. E-mail: rucker@uconnvm.uconn.edu.

Developmental Software Awards

The Developmental Software Awards are presented yearly to exceptional software products that meet children's interests, needs, and abilities. Submitted products are separated into two age-appropriate levels: 3-7 and 8-12. Software is evaluated using the Haugland Developmental Scale and is then field-tested in classrooms and homes. Awards are presented in seven categories: creativity, language, math and science, multipurpose, multicultural, problem solving, and thematic focus.

All Developmental Software titles are featured in *Young Children and Technology: A World of Discovery*, a book by Susan Haugland and June Wright.

Fairfax County (VA) Public Schools

This large Northern Virginia district evaluates educational software and multimedia programs on a continuing basis. Programs rated "Good" to "Excellent" are included in the district's database of approved instructional materials. If a program is included in the database, it receives a "Good" rating in *Only the Best*.

Software titles are first identified for review by district teachers and the district's Department of Instructional Services. Evaluations are completed by two teachers in the curriculum area for which the program is intended, and by one curriculum specialist, who makes the final decision on approval.

For more information, contact Fran Gallagher at (703) 846-8620.

Fermilab Lederman Science Center, Teacher Resource Center

Located at the Lederman Science Education Center in Batavia, Illinois, the Teacher Resource Center

(TRC) was established in 1989 as a clearinghouse of materials and resources for PreK-12 educators in mathematics, science, and technology. Educational materials are housed here for on-site use, inspection, and evaluation. In 1994, the TRC was established as an Eisenhower National Clearinghouse for Mathematics and Science Education Demonstration Site.

Since 1994, the Teacher Resource Center and the Mathematics and Science Consortia of the North Central Regional Education Laboratory (NCREL) have been holding an annual "Educational Software Review." Educators are instructed in the process of software evaluation and participate in evaluating CD-ROMs, videodiscs, probeware, and diskettes. At the end of their evaluations, reviewers are asked to list five products that they consider exemplary. All programs on this list are designated "Excellent" in *Only the Best*.

For more information, contact Susan Dahl, Coordinator, Teacher Resource Center, Fermilab Lederman Science Center, Box 500, MS 777, Batavia, IL 60510-0500. Phone: (630) 840-3094. E-mail: sdahl@fnal.gov.

Florida Department of Education

For several years, the state of Florida has provided funds for its school districts to purchase software and multimedia programs. Annually, each school and district office is asked to submit a nomination form for up to 10 software titles. A statewide committee then reviews each program to ensure it meets the needs of schools throughout Florida. These programs are then listed in the Florida Educational Software Project Catalog. Programs included in this catalog are rated "Excellent" in *Only the Best*.

For more information, contact Peter Lenkway, Administrator, Office of Educational Technology, Florida Department of Education, Florida Education Center, Room 501-B, Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400. Phone: (904) 488-0980. Fax: (904) 488-3691. E-mail: lenkwap@mail.firn.edu.

High/Scope Educational Research Foundation

Before 1996, High/Scope researchers evaluated programs marketed for children ages 3 to 9 on such issues as ease-of-use, educational value, design, and developmental appropriateness. Software programs were used with children in preschool and elementary PreK-4 classes. The evaluations were based on classroom observation of the children using the programs, the comments of teachers, and completion of a High/Scope evaluation form. The ratings were expressed in percentages. A rating of 78% or higher corresponds to an "Excellent" rating in *Only the Best*, and a rating of 65-77% corresponds to "Good."

For more information, contact High/Scope Press, 600 N. River St., Ypsilanti, MI 48198-2898. Phone: (800) 40-PRESS.

History Computer Review

History Computer Review (*HCR*) was founded in 1985 to promote computer-assisted history instruction. *HCR* reaches a worldwide audience of history teachers interested in using electronic tools to reach today's students in ways that promote the imaginative reconstruction of the past, the acquisition of

verbal and cognitive skills, and an interest in the application of historical information to evaluate present reality.

In 12 years of publication, *HCR* has published numerous articles and more than 300 reviews of books and software of potential use for secondary school social studies teachers or university history professors.

Current subscription rates: $20 for U.S. addresses, $25 for non-U.S. addresses. To subscribe to *HCR* or for information on submitting articles, write to James B.M. Schick, Department of History, Pittsburg State University, Pittsburg, KS 66762-7543. Phone: (316) 235-4317. Fax: (316) 232-7515. E-mail jschick@mail.pittstate.edu.

To become a software reviewer or to solicit a review of a specific program, write to Leslie Gene Hunter, Department of History, Texas A&M University at Kingsville, Kingsville, TX 78363. E-mail: L-Hunter2@tamuk.edu.

ISTE Educational Software Evaluation Consortium

The International Society for Technology in Education's (ISTE) Educational Software Evaluation Consortium compiles an annual preview guide listing favorably reviewed software and multimedia programs for grades K-12. The programs are selected by representatives of leading technology evaluation services in North America. Programs are listed on the basis of critical evaluations and discussion among the Consortium's participants. Programs included in the guide are rated "Good" rating in *Only the Best*.

Copies of the *1998 Educational Software Preview Guide* are available from the International Society for Technology in Education, University of Oregon, 1787 Agate Street Eugene, OR 97403. Phone: (541) 346-4414. <http:www.iste.org>.

Learning Magazine Teachers' Choice Awards

Each year a panel of experienced K-8 teachers test the effectiveness of hundreds of products in the classroom. Evaluations are based on quality, instructional value, ease of use, and innovation. The Teachers' Choice Award winners are described in the January edition of *Learning* magazine. Software titles tapped for this award are designated "Excellent" in *Only the Best*.

For more information, contact Teacher's Choice Awards Coodinator Maryalice Schaub, *Learning* Magazine, 3515 West Market Street, Greensboro, NC 27403. Phone: (910) 854-0309. E-mail: maschaub@themailbox.com.

Lesley College, Instructional Computing

The Instructional Computing Department at Lesley College is a state-certified educational software preview center. Their Educational Software Collection contains more than 2000 titles for pre-kindergarten through college-level students. New educational software titles are continually evaluated

by faculty, staff, students, and area educators. Instructional design, content, assessment, teacher support and the technical quality of the program are all considered during the evaluation process. "Excellent" and "Good" ratings directly correspond to those in *Only the Best*.

For more information, contact Instructional Computing Director Eileen Barnett, Lesley College, 29 Everett Street, Cambridge, MA 02138. Phone: (617) 349-8834. E-mail:ebarnett@mail.lesley.edu.

Jefferson County (CO) Public Schools

For each of the past 10 years, the Jefferson County school district has conducted evaluations of various software titles. These evaluations are compiled into an extensive list of recommended titles for K-12. The list is distributed to schools in Jefferson County. Software is reviewed by educators specializing in different fields. Evaluation criteria include quality of delivery, content, and strong relation to curriculum standards. Programs are rated numerically from 1 to 10. Programs that receive a 9 or a 10 from Jefferson County are designated "Excellent" in *Only the Best* and those receiving a 7 or 8 are designated "Good."

For more information, contact John Canuel, Instructional Technology Specialist, ITS Department, Jefferson County Schools, 1829 Denver West Dr., Building 27, Golden, CO 80401. Phone: (303) 982-6845. Fax: (303) 982-6943. E-mail: jcanuel@jeffco.k12.co.us.

MultiMedia Schools

The Product Reviews-in-Brief section in each issue of *MultiMedia Schools* includes evaluations of software products for the K-12 curriculum. Programs are reviewed by educators and, in most cases, are tested in a classroom environment. The evaluators must prepare a report card for each product covering installation, content and features, ease of use, and product support. The overall rating is based on a five-star scale, five stars denoting "Outstanding." Programs with four or five stars are designated "Excellent" in *Only the Best,* and those with three stars are designated "Good."

Annual subscriptions to *MultiMedia Schools* are available in the United States and Canada for $38, and in Mexico for $51. For more information about the reviews section, please contact Susan Veccia, 2809 Brandywine St., NW, Washington, DC 20008. Phone: (202) 244-6710. E-mail: veccia@well.com.

North Carolina Department of Education

The North Carolina Department of Education operates an extensive education software and multimedia evaluation service for state schools. Programs are evaluated by teachers, school administrators, or subject area program consultants who are experienced in the use of computer and multimedia courseware in classroom instruction. Approved programs are included in the state's Advisory List of Instructional Technology. Programs on this list are designated "Good" in *Only the Best*.

These evaluations can be found in *School Library Journal* in the CD-ROM and Software Review column. For more information about the evaluations, contact Media Evaluation Services, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 301 N. Wilmington St., Raleigh, NC 27601. Phone: (919) 715-5357.

Annual subscriptions to the *School Library Journal* are available for $87.50 in the United States. Contact *School Library Journal*, P.O. Box 57559, Boulder, CO 80322-7559. Phone: (800) 456-9409. Fax: (800) 824-4746.

Prince George's County (MD) Public Schools

For the Prince George's County (MD) evaluation program, content area supervisors, teachers, central office instructional technology staff, and school-based computer coordinators suggest software worthy of evaluation by the district's software evaluation committees. Committee members are selected for their curriculum expertise. Members trained in the evaluation process separately evaluate the same program, work to reach consensus on program quality, and complete a three-page evaluation that includes narrative suggestions for program use. As a final step, all software approved by the evaluation committees must have the approval of content area supervisors before it is included on the district's approved software list. Approved software is rated from 1 to 5, with 4 corresponding to "Good" and 5 corresponding to "Excellent" in *Only the Best*.

Contact Judy Finch, Office of Instructional Computing Technology, Bonnie Johns Center, Room 214, Prince George's County Public Schools, 8437 Landover Rd, Landover, MD 20785. Phone: (301) 386-1549. Fax: (301) 396-1660.

Software Publishers Association's Excellence in Software Awards (the Codies)

The Software Publishers Association's (SPA) annual Excellence in Software Awards (the Codies) are the software industry's answer to the Academy Awards. SPA members and nonmembers nominate software for awards in consumer, education, and business categories. SPA members cast votes in the final ballot. A Codies winner ranks "Excellent" and a program placed on the final ballot ranks "Good."

The awards are posted on the World Wide Web and can be found at <http://www.spa.org/>. For more information, contact Heather Lee, Software Publishers Association, 1730 M Street, NW, Suite 700, Washington, DC 20036. Phone: (202) 452-1600.

Technology Connection

Every issue of *Technology Connection* includes a section for software reviews. These evaluations are performed by educators who work with students and electronic learning resources. Recommendations for programs are at three levels: Highly recommended -- should be included in all collections; Recommended -- should be seriously considered for purchase; and Optional Purchase -- purchase only if useful to the collection or if funds are available. Programs that are highly recommended are designated "Excellent" in *Only the Best*, and those that are recommended are designated "Good."

Yearly subscriptions for *Technology Connection* are available for $39 in the United States and $55 in Canada, from Linworth Publishing, Inc., 480 East Wilson Bridge Road, Suite L, Worthington, OH 43085-2372. Phone: (614) 436-7107. E-mail: newslin@aol.com.

Technology & Learning

Each year, *Technology & Learning* magazine (formerly known as *Classroom Computer Learning*) evaluates the latest educational software and multimedia programs and selects the best new programs. Programs selected by the magazine are the result of three rounds of judging with at least four evaluators spending many hours on each program. Classroom appropriateness, quality, and usability of supporting documentation and student-teacher materials are just a few of the criteria used to evaluate the software. Programs selected as a Top Winner rank "Excellent" in *Only the Best*, and those selected for Additional Awards of Excellence rank "Good."

To subscribe or request back issues, contact *Technology & Learning*, Peter Li Inc., P.O. Box 49727, Dayton, OH 45449-0727. Phone: (800)543-4383. For further information about *Technology & Learning* Awards, contact Susan Melester, Senior Editor.

TechTrends

In every issue of *TechTrends* a Media Reviews column includes in-depth evaluations of educational multimedia. Each review consists of a description, a summary of strengths and weaknesses, and an overall grade. Programs that receive an *A+*, *A*, or *A-* are designated "Excellent"in *Only the Best* and those receiving a *B+*, *B*, or *B-* are designated "Good."

TechTrends is published by the Association for Educational Communications and Technology (202) 347-7834. An annual subscription is $40 in the United States and $44 in Canada. For more information about Media Reviews, contact Dan Surry, University of Southern Mississippi, Southern Station Box 5036, Hattiesburg, MS 39406. Phone: (601) 266-4446.

Highest-Rated Programs 1998-99

(Please consult the Interdisciplinary Index for titles that appear in more than one subject area)

The Arts
The Art Lesson
Look What I See!
Paint, Write, and Play!

Early Childhood
Alphabet Express
Eager to Learn!
James Discovers Math
Mixed-Up Mother Goose Deluxe
Putt-Putt Travels Through Time
Sesame Street: Elmo's Preschool Deluxe
Stickybear's Early Learning Activities

Health
How Your Body Works*
My Amazing Human Body

Language Arts
Adventures of Peter Rabbit and Benjamin Bunny
Carmen Sandiego Word Detective
Exploring Shakespeare
Imagination Express Series: Destination: Ocean*
Imagination Express Series: Destination: Pyramids
In My Own Voice: Multi-cultural Poets on Identity*
An Odyssey of Discovery: Writing for Readers
Reader Rabbit's Interactive Reading Journey 2
Storybook Weaver Deluxe!*
Ultimate Writing & Creativity Center
Words Around Me
Writer's Solution

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Cornerstone Mathematics
Math Blaster: In Search of Spot
Math for the Real World
MathKeys: Unlocking Fractions & Decimals 3-6
MathKeys: Unlocking Measurement K-2
MathKeys: Unlocking Measurement 3-6
MathKeys: Unlocking Probability K-2
Mighty Math Calculating Crew
Mighty Math Cosmic Geometry
Schoolhouse Rock: Math Rock
Tesselmania! DELUXE

Problem Solving
Lost Mind of Dr. Brain*
Maurice Ashley Teaches Chess

Reference
Electric Library
Student Reference Library

Science
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BioLab Frog
Eyewitness Encyclopedia of Space and the Universe
Eyewitness Virtual Reality: Dinosaur Hunter*
A Field Trip to the Rainforest*
GeoSafari Animals
The Incredible Machine 3.0
Invention Studio
Inventor Labs
Message in a Fossil
Minds on Science: Impact of Discovery
One Small Square: Seashore
Rainforest Researchers*
Scholastic's The Magic School Bus Explores the Age of Dinosaurs
Science Blaster Jr.
The Ultimate Human Body 2.0
The Ultimate 3D Skeleton
The Way Things Work 2.0
Wide World of Animals

Social Studies
Adventure Time!
The American Girls Premiere
Byzantine: The Betrayal
Chronicle of the 20th Century
Complete Maus*
DISCovering Biography
First-Start Biography
The Greek and Roman World
Imagination Express: Time Trip, USA*
Neighborhood MapMachine
Schoolhouse Rock: America Rock
Where in Time Is Carmen Sandiego?
Where in the World Is Carmen Sandiego?
World Discovery Deluxe

Student Helper
Higher Score for the SAT/ACT

Tools
ClarisWorks for Kids
Kid Pix Studio*
mPOWER
Print Shop PressWriter
Timeliner 4.0*
Web Workshop

***Denotes an *Only the Best* Classic**

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The Art Lesson

(CD-ROM: MAC/WIN Hybrid)

Publisher:
The Learning Company, Inc.

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): K-4

Subject(s): Arts
Language Arts
ESL

Cost (School Edition): $54.95; Lab pack (5) $124.95; 15-CD pack, $337.95; 25-CD building site license, $494.95.

Hardware Requirements: **Windows** 3.1 or later, 486 or faster, 4MB RAM, 13-inch color monitor, 256 colors; **Macintosh** 68040 or faster, 5MB RAM (8MB recommended), 256 colors.

Magazine Reviews: *The Technish*, November 1996; *School Library Journal*, April 1997; *Work/Family Directions, Inc.*, April 1997; *Software Parent Guide*, April 1997; *THE MAILBOX Bookbag*, July 1997.

Description: This program is a bilingual **interactive literature experience** based on the original work of author Tomie dePaola. Young artist "Tommy" loves to draw at home using a variety of papers and colors. At school, Tommy soon learns that he doesn't have the same freedom to create. With a click of the mouse, students can hear dePaola himself narrate the story. Students can also read the book themselves and explore its pages. Text and illustrations come to life with color and noise on every page. Fourteen integrated art activities let children create right along with the author. Through video clips, students explore dePaola's studio, hear him talk about his childhood experiences, and learn about his life as an author and illustrator. The program is presented in English or Spanish.

Tips: Jefferson County (CO) evaluators note that the program "supports children's emerging literacy" and "helps define fine motor skills." North Carolina evaluators find the following strengths: "If children interrupt the story, they can resume where they left off easily by going to a menu of thumbnails of each page. The program also indicates the last page read by highlighting its thumbnail with a red border. Audio help is available from the main menu and within each art activity." The only disadvantage/weakness noted by the evaluators is limited classroom use for such a program.

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- Binghamton (NY) City School District, March 1997; Jefferson County (CO) Public Schools, 1996/97. **Good** -- North Carolina Department of Education (*School Library Journal*, April 1997).

Look What I See!

(CD-ROM: MAC/WIN/WIN95 Hybrid)

Publisher:
Mitsubishi Chemical Corporation/
Metropolitan Museum of Art

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): PreK-4

Subject(s): Arts
Painting

Cost: $39.95.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 486 or faster, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, 256 colors; **Macintosh** System 7.0 or later, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, 256 colors.

Description: This **interactive exploration program** makes art come alive. The program is based on the parent-child workshops of Muriel Silberstein-Storfer, who teaches at The Metropolitan Museum of Art. A wide range of activities--finding, changing, looking, and comparing--lead children to experiment and make their own discoveries about art. Dozens of masterpieces from The Metropolitan Museum of Art and outstanding wildlife photos illustrate the nature of art and the art of nature. Students can zoom in to uncover hidden objects and fascinating details. They learn how mixing five basic colors can create hundreds more. Users can change elements of a picture and see how color and light affect it or look for colors, shapes, objects, and other hidden elements. Simple icons and clear audio instructions make it easy for children to use the program on their own.

Tips: Children can visit the Mood, Color, Shape, or Paint room. The Paint room provides video demonstrations for students to view. In the other three rooms, children explore, investigate, and discover. An information button in each room provides guidance and offers challenging questions. A parent-teacher section brings advice and anecdotes from Muriel Silberstein-Storfer showing children how to develop creativity skills on and off the computer.

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- Bologna New Media Prize, 1997; Developmental Software Awards, 1997.

Paint, Write, and Play!

(CD-ROM: MAC/WIN Hybrid)

Publisher:
The Learning Company, Inc.

Copyright: 1997

Grade(s): K-2

Subject(s): Arts
Language Arts
Early Childhood
ESL

Cost (School Edition): $54.95; Lab pack (5) $124.95; 15-CD pack $337.95; 25-CD building site license $494.95.

Hardware Requirements: **Windows** 3.1, 486DX/33MHz or faster, 8MB RAM, 13-inch color monitor, 256 colors; **Macintosh** System 7.01 or later, 68030 or faster, 8MB RAM, 256 colors.

Magazine Reviews: *Family PC*, January 1997; *U.S. News & World Report*, July 1997; *Early Childhood News*, July/August 1997; *Infotech*, September 1997.

Description: This **writing program** helps young students develop vocabulary and basic writing skills. *Paint, Write, and Play!* engages children in writing stories and painting pictures on the computer. The program offers spoken help for emerging readers along with delightful animation and silly sound effects. Multisensory environments from around the world stretch students' imaginations, build vocabulary, and offer story ideas. Easy-to-use painting and drawing tools feature 48 colors, textured fill patterns, and hundreds of clip-art images.

Applications for Diverse Learners: Picture word lists help limited-English-proficient students and emerging readers to identify the meanings of new words. Text-to-speech capability lets students hear their stories read out loud.

Tips: Jefferson County (CO) evaluators note that the program is "highly motivating" and "allows students to write and create graphics at an early level. Excellent teacher's guide and blackline masters." Evaluators for *Children's Software Revue* recommend the program for 6- to 8-year-olds. They find the design "somewhat unpolished" but note that "the program contains some useful tools for early writing experiences" and "testers particularly liked that the computer could read aloud their stories." North Carolina evaluators found the following strengths: "This program offers multiple avenues for exploration and expression. Spoken words and instructions, story read-back in synthesized speech, and word-insert features support young users. Appealing printed products reward young writers and entice new readers." These evaluators noted the following weaknesses: "Students can't import graphics or scanned images. Words can't be placed in the picture area to create labeled diagrams."

Evaluator Conclusions: **Excellent** -- Developmental Software Awards, 1996; Jefferson County (CO) Public Schools, 1996/97. **Good** -- *Children's Software Revue*, October/November 1996; North Carolina Department of Education (*School Library Journal*, August 1997).

Alphabet Express

(CD-ROM: MAC/WIN Hybrid)

Publisher:
School Zone Publishing

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): PreK-1

Subject(s): Early Childhood
Language Arts
Reading
Problem Solving

Cost: $45.95; Lab pack (5) $149.50.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 486 or faster, 8MB RAM, 15MB hard drive space, 2X CD-ROM drive, 8 bit audio, 256 colors, mouse; **Macintosh** System 7.0 or later, 68030, 8MB RAM, 4MB hard drive space, 8 bit audio, 256 colors.

Magazine Reviews:
Curriculum Administrator, August 1996; *Mac Today*, March 1996; *MacUser*, October 1996; *Family PC*, September 1996.

Description: This **interactive activity program** challenges students to read and write. It is easy to use and includes a helpful alligator train conductor who guides students' exploration of the program. There are eight different teaching segments. In Letter Scenes, students click on objects that begin with the featured letter and discover dozens of animations. In Coloring Pages, uppercase and lowercase letter pages, beginning letter scenes, and letter printing practice pages can be colored on-screen or printed and colored by hand. In Firehouse Game, students match the featured letter's sound to a picture and count the ways that an elephant puts out a fire. In Alphabet Song, letters introduce themselves with an original tune. In Hidden Letters, students explore to find each letter. In Dot-to-Dots, engaging pictures review uppercase and lowercase letters and sequencing skills. In Mazes, students take maze adventures. In Theater, students choose between two animated films in which the alphabet has a starring role.

Tips: A North Carolina evaluator notes this program has "appealing displays with friendly animals, vivid colors, and bouncy sound effects [that] will engage youngsters easily." The evaluator also notes that audio help is always available should the student become confused or stuck.

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- *Children's Software Revue,* June/July 1996. **Good** -- North Carolina Department of Education (*School Library Journal*, April 1997); California Instructional Technology Clearinghouse, 1998; 1996 *Technology and Learning* Awards, November/December 1996.

Eager to Learn!

(CD-ROM: MAC/WIN/WIN95 Hybrid)

Publisher:
Sierra On-Line

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): PreK-3

Subject(s): Early Childhood
Language Arts
Mathematics
Reading

Cost: $30.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 486 or faster, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, SVGA, 256 colors, sound card; **Macintosh** System 7.1 or later, 68040 or faster, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, 13" monitor.

Magazine Reviews: *Boston Globe*, October 30, 1995; *San Jose Mercury News*, December 29, 1996.

Description: This **interactive activity program** helps students with the fundamentals of early learning, specifically reading and math. *Eager to Learn!* reinforces the skills associated with mathematics and word association through interactive puzzles, games, an easy-to-use art studio, and numerous other activities. Character Adi Jr. amuses and delights the young student throughout the games and offers positive reinforcement along the way. Teachers and parents can gauge student progress with a progress report feature.

Tips: Evaluators from Jefferson County (CO) Public Schools call this program "highly motivating . . . the top level even challenges some third graders." They also note it "eases teacher management" and "aids in teaching difficult concepts" in areas such as counting, math, conceptual thinking, letters, and reading. They suggest having students work one-on-one, in a lab, or in small groups with this program. *Children's Software Revue* evaluators say the only drawback for this software is "the need to swap CDs in order to get between 'Adi's World' and the learning activities." "Activities are paced to hold the attention of youngsters and give frequent positive feedback," notes an evaluator from the North Carolina Department of Education. The North Carolina evaluator suggests that this program be used to "reinforce early learning skills, such as visual perception, observation, spatial relationships, counting, and sequencing."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- *Children's Software Revue*, December 1996/January 1997; Jefferson County (CO) Public Schools, 1996/97. **Good** -- North Carolina Department of Education (*School Library Journal*, September 1997).

James Discovers Math

(CD-ROM: MAC, WIN, WIN95)

Publisher:
Broderbund Software, Inc.

Copyright: 1995

Grade(s): PreK-2

Subject(s): Early Childhood
Addition
Estimation
Measurement
Problem solving
Shapes

Cost: $40.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 386 or faster, 4MB hard drive space, 4MB RAM (8MB RAM for WIN95), 2X CD-ROM drive, SVGA;
Macintosh System 7.01 or later, 4MB RAM, 1MB hard drive space, 13" monitor, 256 colors.

Description: This **interactive activity program** offers 10 creative mathematics areas within young James' kitchen. Each area leads to different mathematics challenge games in which children learn basic concepts such as number and spatial recognition, pattern matching, and sorting. Games include a storybook, blocks, picture shapes, measurement, magic carpet, nursery rhymes, boat shapes, and fruit shop. A set of 40 Cuisenaire Attrilinks manipulatives and an activity guide are included in the school edition. Also included are a teacher's section with 21 lessons and backline masters.

Tips: California Instructional Technology Clearinghouse Evaluators note that this program "may be used with the whole class to introduce lessons in counting, discriminating sizes, measurement, etc." *Children's Software Revue* evaluators add that the activities in this program are "for the most part straightforward and well-designed, and were addictive and fun for our 4-year-old testers." North Carolina evaluators note the 10 activities in this program are correlated to the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) standards. In summary, the North Carolina evaluators state that this program "provides meaningful early math activities with enough variety to keep young learners interested and involved."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- *Children's Software Revue*, February/March 1996. **Good** -- North Carolina Department of Education (*School Library Journal*, January 1996); ISTE Educational Software Evaluation Consortium, 1997; California Instructional Technology Clearinghouse, 1998.

Mixed-Up Mother Goose Deluxe

(CD-ROM: MAC, WIN)

Publisher:
Sierra On-Line

Copyright: 1995

Grade(s): PreK-3

Subject(s): Early Childhood
Problem Solving
Language Arts

Cost: $19.95.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 386 or faster, CD-ROM drive, 6MB RAM, SVGA monitor, sound card, mouse; **Macintosh** System 6.07 or later, 2.2MB RAM, 256 colors, CD-ROM drive.

Description: Fly away in this **interactive** problem-solving journey high over Mother Goose Land. Eighteen of Mother Goose's favorite characters have lost an object from their rhyme, and she asks the young game player for help finding these objects and returning them to their rightful owners. Children will explore this magical land and meet wonderful nursery rhyme characters while they improve their creative thinking and problem-solving skills. All-new songs and brilliant graphics will keep children entertained and delighted for hours. A multilingual option allows students to play along in several different languages.

Tips: The judges at the Developmental Software Awards note that this is one of the first programs that allows children "to select the program leader (main character) from diverse options varying in age, racial background, and gender. *Children's Software Revue* evaluators note that this program is "clearly more of a game than an educational endeavor [but] the program does encourage problem-solving and memory skills." These reviewers added that they worried that there was a shortage of activities within the program and they questioned the program's long-term use. The young testers, however, "loved this program and spent hours actively engaged." The consensus among the reviewers was that this was a good form of "edutainment" that could be used to introduce children to computers.

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- Florida Department of Education, 1997/1998; Developmental Software Awards, 1997. **Good** -- Prince George's County (MD) Public Schools, 1997; *Children's Software Revue*, August/September, 1995.

Putt-Putt Travels Through Time

(CD-ROM: MAC/WIN Hybrid)

Publisher:
Humongous Entertainment Corp.

Copyright: 1997

Grade(s): PreK-3

Subject(s): Early Childhood
Mathematics
Problem Solving
Language Arts

Cost: $39.95.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 486 or faster, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, Sound Blaster or compatible sound card, SVGA monitor;
Macintosh System 7.0 or later, 68040 or faster, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive.

Magazine Reviews: *HomePC*, September 1997; *Family PC*, October 1997; *PC Magazine*, June 24, 1997; *Warren Buckleitner's Thunderbeam Review*, June 4, 1997.

Description: In this **interactive activity program**, Smokey the Fire Engine and Putt-Putt's dog Pep, lunch box, calculator, and history report are accidentally pulled into Mr. Firebird's time machine. Students help Putt-Putt travel through time to find Pep and his school supplies and return them to the present so that Mr. Firebird can close the time machine. Children use the time machine to visit the age of the dinosaurs, medieval times, the Old West, and the future. Games and activities test memory, challenge math skills, teach about shapes, and encourage creativity. Young students play with faithful, lovable friends as they discover captivating worlds where they direct the journey and overcome challenges at their own pace.

Tips: Developmental Software Awards evaluators say this program is "user friendly and engages children's minds for extended periods, building mapping, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills." A *Children's Software Revue* evaluator notes that there are more than 40 different screens to visit, "each with clickables and challenges," and concludes, "This is a great program, strong in both educational and entertainment value. Some preschoolers may find it a bit tricky and parents might have to lend a hand, but the experience is rewarding and fun."

Evaluator Conclusions: **Excellent --** *Children's Software Revue*, June/July 1997; Developmental Software Awards, 1997.

Sesame Street Learning Series: Elmo's Preschool Deluxe

(CD-ROM: WIN, WIN95)

Publisher:
The Learning Company, Inc.

Copyright: 1997

Grade(s): PreK-1

Subject(s): Early Childhood
Reading
Mathematics
Problem Solving

Cost: $39.95.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 486 or faster, 8MB RAM, 3MB hard drive space, 2X CD-ROM drive, Windows-compatible sound card, SVGA monitor, 256 colors, mouse.

Magazine Reviews: *Parenting*, August 1997.

Description: This **interactive activity program** set consists of two popular Sesame Street titles: *Elmo's Preschool* and *Search and Learn Adventures*. *Elmo's Preschool* presents 15 different activities that cover 30 essential skills. Children interact with Elmo and learn about letters, numbers, music, shapes, colors, and creativity. They also explore social skills like sharing, cooperation, and understanding others. Elmo models positive behaviors and offers clues along the way. *Search and Learn Adventures* helps students strengthen listening, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills while reinforcing important real-world concepts like safety, good habits, nutrition, and recycling. Sherlock Hemlock, the world's greatest detective, and his trusty dog, Watson, are accompanied by a host of other Sesame Street characters to help kids discover valuable preschool skills as they solve mysteries on Sesame Street.

Tips: Evaluators at *Children's Software Revue* call this program "an excellent value . . . [that is] appealing and easy to use." These evaluators add that even "computer-savvy three-year-olds had no trouble getting around . . . and kids asked to play over and over again." A parent guide offers information on introducing children to the computer.

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- *Children's Software Revue*, June/July 1997; Developmental Software Awards,* 1997.

Stickybear's Early Learning Activities

(CD-ROM: MAC/WIN hybrid; DISKETTE: MAC, WIN)

Publisher:
Optimum Resource, Inc.

Copyright: 1995

Grade(s): PreK-1

Subject(s): Early Childhood
Language Arts
Mathematics
Foreign Language
ESL

Cost: $89.95; Lab pack (6) $159.95; Site license (30 CD-ROMs or unlimited diskettes) $699.95.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 486 or faster, 4MB RAM, CD-ROM drive, Windows-compatible sound card (recommended), SVGA monitor; **Macintosh** System 6.07 or later, 2MB RAM, CD-ROM drive, 256 colors.

Description: This **interactive activity program** features six bilingual learning activities for children ages 2-6. Children learn about the alphabet, counting, grouping, shapes, opposites, and colors. Two modes of play, structured and nonstructured, allow students to learn through prompted direction or discovery. The alphabet activity provides a word, letter, and animation for every letter of the alphabet. In the counting activity, animated objects accompanied by audio prompts help children master the numbers zero through nine while they discover the effects of adding and taking away. The grouping activity builds on counting skills and introduces children to group concepts. Students also identify basic shapes found in everyday scenes. Other activities allow students to explore opposites as they build word recognition and vocabulary skills and identify and name colors.

Tips: *Learning Magazine* evaluators say this program "introduces reading and math skills to children in a way that makes learning an adventure through exploration and discovery," and that "all activities provide positive reinforcement." Florida Department of Education evaluators suggest this program will "foster important basic skills" for preschoolers.

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- Florida Department of Education, 1997/98; *Learning Magazine* Teachers' Choice Award, January/February 1996. **Good** -- ISTE Educational Software Evaluation Consortium, 1997.

How Your Body Works

(CD-ROM: MAC, WIN, WIN95)

Publisher:
Mindscape, Inc.

Copyright: 1995

Grade(s): 6-12

Subject(s): Health
Science
Biology
Anatomy
Reference

Cost (School Edition): $89.95. Contact publisher for further information.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 25 MHZ 386 or faster, 4MB hard drive space (10MB recommended), 8MB RAM, SVGA (640x480) monitor, 256 colors (65,000 colors recommended), double speed CD-ROM drive, Sound Blaster or compatible sound card, mouse; **Macintosh** LCII or better, system 7.1 or higher, 4MB hard drive space (10MB recommended), 8MB RAM, 13" monitor, 256 colors (65,000 colors recommended), double-speed CD-ROM drive, mouse.

Magazine Reviews: *Booklist*, October 1,1995; *Electronic Learning*, October 1995; *Learning & Leading with Technology*, September 1995.

Description: The objective of this multimedia **reference/exploration program** is to help students learn about anatomical and physiological systems. This interactive encyclopedia, based on the Ziff-Press book of the same name, is enriched with graphics, narration, 3-D animation, audio, text, over an hour of full-motion video, 200 photographs, virtual images, and easy-to-understand descriptions. A virtual 3-D pathology lab is the interface for the program, which consists of 11 modules. Information is classified in each module according to the 12 body systems: circulation; digestion; hearing and balance; hormones; infection fighters; locomotion; reproduction; respiration; seeing; skin, hair, and nails; smelling and tasting; and thought and action. As the user moves the mouse across lab objects, pop-up labels describe each section of the program. Click on the body model to launch one of 12 animated 3-D system tours and fly through the human circulatory system. Select the X-ray screen to see an anatomy chart while the laboratory VCR opens to reveal Wellness, containing 37 video interviews with leading medical experts. The medicine chest reveals information about prescription and over-the-counter drugs and a comprehensive first aid manual. The teacher's guide includes lessons and worksheets for all 12 systems.

Tips: An evaluator for *Electronic Learning* states that the teacher's guide offers "excellent suggested extensions and activities . . . . The program also offers several useful installment options, including minimal installation and a block for visually sensitive reproductive topics."

Evaluator Conclusions: **Excellent** -- Jefferson County (CO) Public Schools, 1996/1997; Prince George's County (MD) Public Schools, 1997; *Curriculum Administrator* 1996 Districts' Choice Award, June 1996; *Technology Connection*, March 1996. **Good** -- Fermilab Lederman Science Center, October 1996; North Carolina Department of Education (*School Library Journal*, June 1996).

Title Originally Included in *Only the Best*, 1997

My Amazing Human Body

(CD-ROM: MAC/WIN)

Publisher:
DK Multimedia

Copyright: 1997

Grade(s): K-4

Subject(s): Science
Health
Anatomy
Biology

Cost (School Edition): $44.95; Lab pack (5) $99.95.

Hardware Requirements: **Windows** 3.1 or later, 486 or faster, 12MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, Windows-compatible sound card, SVGA monitor, 256 colors, mouse; **Macintosh** System 7.0 or later, 68LC040 or faster, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, 256 colors, mouse.

Magazine Reviews: *Technology & Learning*, August 1997; *Curriculum Administrator*, October 1997; *NSTA Reports!*, October/November 1997; *School Library Journal*, December 1997.

Description: This **interactive exploration program** allows students to learn about the body from the inside out through interactive games and activities. The program features Seemore Skinless, a mischievous 3-D skeleton who guides students as they learn about human anatomy, health, and nutrition. Students will satisfy their curiosity about what's going on in their own bodies and learn the basics of anatomy through activities like building a body and playing a take-me-apart game. Special features include four learning games; 35 fully controllable 3-D organs and body parts; 3-D effects and animations that bring the body to life; a file that children can personalize with information about themselves; a complete index giving instant access to more than 600 article screens; 35,000 words of text prepared by education experts in a lively and clear style; 10 printable experiment sheets; and a built-in connection to a learning club World Wide Web site.

Tips: There is a secret file within *My Amazing Human Body* that allows students to record things about themselves such as favorite food, height and weight, and things that they have learned through this program. Evaluators list the entertaining activities, excellent graphics, and well-labeled diagrams as reasons to purchase this program. *Children's Software Revue* evaluators state that "both parents and teachers will appreciate the program's design, which encourages kids to look up topics in an extensive information section."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- American Library Association's "Best" List, 1998; Binghamton (NY) City School District, November 1997; *Children's Software Revue*, March/April 1998. **Good** -- North Carolina Department of Education (*School Library Journal*, March 1998).

Adventures of Peter Rabbit and Benjamin Bunny

(CD-ROM: MAC, WIN)

Publisher:
Mindscape, Inc.

Copyright: 1995

Grade(s): K-2

Subject(s): Language Arts
Early Childhood
Reading

Cost (School Edition): $79.95; $179.95 for Lab Pack (5 copies).

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or higher, 486 or faster, 2X CD-ROM drive, SVGA (640x480) monitor, 256 colors, 8MB RAM, 10MB hard drive space Windows compatible sound card; **Macintosh** System 7.1 or later, 68040 or faster, 8MB RAM, 10MB hard drive space, 2X CD-ROM drive, 13" color monitor, 256 colors.

Magazine Reviews:
American Bookseller, August 1996; The Best of 1996 *Tribune* Review, November 25, 1996.

Description: This **interactive storybook** lets students place themselves into the charming world of Beatrix Potter's classic, *Peter Rabbit*. From the main menu, children can click on several places, such as the woods or Mr. McGregor's garden, and start their exploration. Unique Mindscape technology creates a 360-degree landscape where students can navigate between thirteen 3-D scenes. Educationally tested, the two illustrated stories in this program feature a talking glossary designed to teach students new words and phrases. Hand-drawn animations, sound effects, and music make this a student's favorite.

Tips: Florida Department of Education evaluators suggest that this program "fosters the development of early reading concepts." *Technology Connection* evaluators recommend this product, saying, "Classroom teachers and library media specialists working with primary grades will appreciate the power of this product to bring alive the magic of fine literature for the multimedia generation." A North Carolina evaluator adds, "Activities and games reinforce vocabulary development, number recognition, and hand-eye coordination in young children."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- Florida Department of Education, 1997/1998. **Good** -- Prince George's County (MD) Public Schools 1997; North Carolina Department of Education (*School Library Journal*, September 1996); *Technology Connection*, March 1997.

Carmen Sandiego Word Detective

(CD-ROM: MAC/Power MAC, WIN/WIN95)

Publisher:
Broderbund Software Inc.

Copyright: 1997

Grade(s): 3-6

Subject(s): Language Arts
Reading
Spelling
Problem Solving
Social Studies
Geography

Cost: $40.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 486 or faster, 8MB RAM (16MB RAM with WIN95), 20MB hard drive space, 2X CD-ROM drive, SVGA monitor, 256 colors; **Macintosh** System 7.1 or later, 20MHz 68040 processor or faster, 20MB hard drive space, 6MB RAM (7MB RAM for Power PC), 2X CD-ROM drive, 256 colors.

Description: With this **interactive activity program,** students solve word problems to foil Carmen Sandiego's latest evil plot. Carmen Sandiego has invented the Babble-On Machine, a diabolical device that transforms language into utter nonsense. To restore the power of the written and spoken word to a dozen babbling ACME agents, students must complete 12 missions that require them to solve more than 60 skill-building activities. *Merriam-Webster's Vest Pocket Dictionary* (Springfield, Mass.: Merriam-Webster, 1997) is included as a resource. A practice mode features thousands of exercises that develop spelling, grammar, and vocabulary proficiency, along with 18 fact-filled stories that shed light on science, history, geography, and the elusive Carmen Sandiego.

Tips: Lesley College Evaluators note that the puzzles "are all engaging and lots of fun . . . three difficulty levels will keep students from becoming bored." The six different types of puzzles are all associated with the language arts and students can learn up to 10,000 new words." *Children's Software Revue* evaluators add, "The mystery-suspense format keeps kids engaged and entertained. Adults will appreciate the fact that it takes at least a half hour of language arts practice to free each agent."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- *Children's Software Revue,* January/February 1998; Lesley College Instructional Computing Department, 1998.

Exploring Shakespeare

(CD-ROM: WIN/WIN95; ONLINE via GaleNet)

Publisher:
Gale Research

Copyright: 1997

Grade(s): 10-12

Subject(s): Language Arts
History

Cost: Site license (30) $500.
Annual GaleNet subscription, $167.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 386 PC or faster (486 or faster recommended), 8MB RAM, CD-ROM drive, sound card, SVGA monitor, 256 colors.

Magazine Reviews: *Book Report*, February 1998; *Media & Methods*, April 1997; *Curriculum Administrator*, January 1997; *Festival Newsletter*, December 1996; *Electronic Reference Reviews*, September 1997.

Description: *Exploring Shakespeare* is a **reference tool** that helps students gain an understanding of William Shakespeare's four most frequently taught plays: Hamlet, Julius Caesar, Macbeth, and Romeo and Juliet. From the opening menu, students have access to the information necessary to study each of the four plays. Students can combine criteria to create custom data sorts with the Custom Search option and can scan the entire database with the Free Text Search option. Results of searches are combined and listed to allow students to toggle between screens to compare and contrast information. The CD-ROM transports students back to Elizabethan England, from which Shakespeare drew inspiration, and offers essays on clothing, food, transportation, religion, entertainment, family life, and living conditions. Specially commissioned audio recordings of famous scenes, video clips of play productions, essays on the Globe Theatre, a timeline of world and literary events, and graphics and illustrations are also included.

Tips: Evaluators from *Technology Connection* highly recommend this software, saying it is "a quality-designed product with curriculum in mind." *MultiMedia Schools* evaluators suggest *Exploring Shakespeare* would be "a popular addition to any high school" and would "enhance students' enjoyment of literature." An evaluator from the *School Library Journal* states that both teachers and students would find this program useful for research and self-tutoring. All evaluators note that the program is easy to use and full of information.

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- *MultiMedia Schools*, January/February 1998; *Technology Connection*, September 1997. **Good** -- North Carolina Department of Education (*School Library Journal*, June, 1997).

Imagination Express Series: Destination: Ocean

(CD-ROM: MAC, WIN, WIN95)

Publisher:
Edmark Corporation

Copyright: 1995

Grade(s): 1-6

Subject(s): Language Arts
Social Studies
Science

Cost (School Edition): $39.95; Lab pack (5 CD-ROMs) $139.95.

Hardware Requirements: **Windows** 3.1 or later, 386 or faster, 8MB RAM, SVGA monitor, 256 colors, 4MB hard drive space, 2X CD-ROM drive, mouse, sound-output device; **Macintosh** System 7 or later, 8MB RAM, 4MB hard drive space, 2X CD-ROM drive, 13" or larger monitor, 256 colors.

Magazine Reviews: *Learning*, October/November 1995; *Science & Children*, February 1996; *Teaching PreK-8*, May 1995.

Tips: Evaluators with the Jefferson County (CO) Public Schools liked the Ocean Fact Book, which includes reference information on ocean life. These evaluators also called the program "highly motivating! Desirable student-student interaction . . . [a] good simulation of experiences that are otherwise difficult to obtain."

Description: The purpose of this **multimedia authoring tool** is to assist in the development of creativity, language, writing, and communication skills. *Destination: Ocean*, one of six modules in the *Imagination Express* series, inspires students to create interactive stories and movies. Using exciting new technology, kids make stickers move across each scene: Sharks swim through the sea kelp while dolphins leap above the waves. After reading or listening to samples, students create their own electronic books, using pre-designed backgrounds, applying special-effect stickers, and choosing appropriate theme music and sound effects. Special effects in this program include stickers that automatically resize when moved into the background or to the forefront of a scene. Users can add music, sounds, and narration with an optional microphone. Animated characters deliver story ideas to assist students who need help starting their own electronic book. A Parent Letter explains process writing and answers related questions. The program comes with a user's manual and a teacher's guide. The teacher's guide includes activities categorized by subject area, reproducible activity sheets, suggestions for use with specific student populations, and Fact Book information.

Evaluator Conclusions: **Excellent** -- California Instructional Technology Clearinghouse, 1995; ConnSENSE, May 1995; *Curriculum Administrator* 1995 Districts' Choice Awards, June 1995; Florida Department of Education, 1997/98; Jefferson County (CO) Public Schools, 1996/97; Media & Methods Awards, May/June 1995 and 1996; Prince George's County (MD) Public Schools, November 1995 and 1996; 1995 Technology & Learning Awards, November/December 1995. **Good** -- *Children's Software Revue*, February/March 1995; ISTE Educational Software Evaluation Consortium, 1996; Fairfax County (VA) Public Schools, November 1995; Software Publishers Association 1996 Excellence in Software Awards (the Codies).

Title Originally Appeared in *Only the Best*, 1997

Imagination Express Series: Destination: Pyramids

(CD-ROM: MAC/Power MAC/WIN/WIN95 Hybrid)

Publisher:
Edmark Corporation

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): K-8

Subject(s): Language Arts
Social Studies
Writing
Reading
Arts

Cost (School Edition): $39.95; Lab Pack (5) $139.95; Site license $499. District license available.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1, 25MHz 386 or faster, 4MB hard drive space, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, 8- or 16-bit sound card, SVGA display, 256 colors (printer and microphone recommended); **Macintosh** System 7 or later, 68LC040 processor or faster, 8MB RAM, 4MB hard drive space, 2X CD-ROM drive, 13" monitor or larger, 256 colors (printer and microphone recommended).

Magazine Reviews: *Curriculum Administrator*, August 1996; *Learning and Leading with Technology*, November 1996; *Media & Methods*, December 1996; *T.H.E. Journal*, August 1996.

Description: This **multimedia authoring tool** builds writing, creativity, and communication skills. Students can create a variety of works: illustrated books and poetry; on-screen puppet plays, movies, and theater productions; journals, diaries, and letters; research reports; and multimedia presentations. They can choose an ancient temple, a pharaoh's palace, the foot of a pyramid, or the middle of a village as background scenes.

Applications for Diverse Learners: The *Imagination Express* series can be used in small group, cooperative learning, and teacher-student or therapist-student situations. Presetting or limiting the number of story backgrounds and functions helps students who are motor impaired or developmentally delayed. Nonverbal students can use sticker animation and word processing in electronic book or printed book formats.

Tips: *Technology & Learning* evaluators say, "Teachers will especially appreciate the comprehensive classroom materials, customizable menu bar, and video story starters." Developmental Software Awards evaluators note that "movies and books can be edited, an important asset for encouraging reflective thinking." *Technology Connection* evaluators appreciate the diverse student presenters in the story ideas section. North Carolina evaluators note the following weaknesses: "Recorded sounds take up considerable space on the hard drive. Manipulation of stickers may be a frustrating or difficult fine motor skill for young students," but overall they conclude, "This appealing, multifaceted learning and storytelling tool encourages interest in research and writing skill development."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- Developmental Software Awards, 1997; *Technology Connection*, September 1997. **Good** -- North Carolina Department of Education (*School Library Journal*, January 1997); *Technology & Learning*, November/December 1996.

In My Own Voice: Multicultural Poets on Identity

(CD-ROM: MAC)

Publisher:
Sunburst Communications, Inc.

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): 7-12

Subject(s): Language Arts
Social Studies

Cost (School Edition): $99.95; Lab pack (5) $129.95; Lab pack (25) $399.95.

Hardware Requirements:
Macintosh System 7.0 or later, 68030 or faster, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, 13" color monitor, 256 colors, speakers.

Magazine Reviews: *Electronic Learning*, September 1996.

Tips: An evaluator for *MultiMedia Schools* says this program "provides an excellent introduction to contemporary American multicultural poets." The evaluator adds, "nothing is offensive about the content, [but] much of it might be more appropriate for high school rather than middle school students." A North Carolina Department of Education evaluator finds the teacher's guide extremely useful and calls the program "an excellent resource for enhancing creative writing and exploring the context of identity in a multicultural society."

Description: The objective of this **creative activity and exploration program** is to provide an interactive anthology through which students experience the poetry of nine contemporary multicultural American poets and develop their own poetic skills. The program, which can be used to supplement social studies, art, music, and language arts classes, is set on a Greenwich Village street in New York City where students enter stores. The poets selected are diverse in age, gender, and ethnicity (the CD-ROM includes African American, Hispanic, Jewish, and Native American poets). Students can browse poems according to such themes as motion, solitude, or relationship. Using the tape recorder function, users can listen to a variety of music and sounds and record their own poetry. In Eastside Books, students follow the text of poems and view artwork as they hear poets read their work and discuss their inspiration. In Sun Gallery, there are more than 80 Fine Art selections linked to the poems. WriterSpace offers a place where students express their own poetic thoughts as they listen to music, view art, hear readings, and use a Word Generator that creates random word combinations. Audio, text, and artwork can be saved throughout the program on a printable notepad. Each unit in the teacher's guide highlights biographical information about the poets, outlines ideas for discussing each poem's themes and forms, draws parallels in gallery artwork, and offers writing tips from the poets.

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- Baltimore County (MD) Public Schools, 1996; *Learning Magazine* Teacher's Choice Awards, 1997. **Good** -- ISTE Educational Software Evaluation Consortium, 1997; *MultiMedia Schools*, March/April 1997; North Carolina Department of Education (*School Library Journal*, September 1996); Software Publishers Association 1997 Excellence in Software Awards (the Codies).

Title Originally Appeared in *Only the Best*, 1997/1998

An Odyssey of Discovery: Writing for Readers

(CD-ROM: MAC)

Publisher:
Pierian Spring Software

Copyright: 1997

Grade(s): 4-12

Subject(s): Language Arts
Reading
Writing
Problem Solving

Cost (School Edition): $59; Lab pack (5) $199; Lab pack (10) $299; Site license, $499.

Hardware Requirements:
Macintosh System 7.1 or later, 25 MHz 68040 or faster, 4MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, 13" monitor, 256 colors.

Magazine Reviews: *Software Review*, February 1998; *ComputED Gazette* (1997/98 BESSIE Award), December 1997.

Description: This teacher-developed software is a **writing program** that provides a learning environment where students discover that writing is a process of discovery and a means of unlocking creativity. *An Odyssey of Discovery: Writing for Readers* helps students develop creative thinking skills and demonstrates that the goal of writing is to inspire, affect, and inform the reader. Four challenging activities allow writers to brainstorm; experiment with the development of plot, characters, and setting; write and revise dialogue; and connect with actual writers who talk about their writing strategies. Interactive activities help students to unlock their imaginations; think critically about all aspects of writing; experiment with voice, style, and genre; and learn the importance of details. This program is aligned with National Council of Teachers of English and International Reading Association standards.

Application for Diverse Learners: An on-screen mentor provides instruction and help with each activity. A glossary allows students to explore new terms. An on-screen portfolio allows students to save their work and receive feedback from the teacher.

Tips: A *Technology & Learning* evaluator describes this program as "never dry," colorful, and interactive and states: "All aspects of the beautifully designed program focus on motivating and empowering students." North Carolina Department of Education evaluators call this program "an inspiring and informative resource for encouraging students of all ages."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- Binghamton (NY) City School District, May 1997; *Technology & Learning*, November/December 1997. **Good** -- North Carolina Department of Education (*School Library Journal*, July 1997).

Reader Rabbit's Interactive Reading Journey 2

(CD-ROM: MAC/WIN Hybrid)

Publisher:
The Learning Company, Inc.

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): 1-2

Subject(s): Language Arts
Reading

Cost (School Edition): $89.95; Lab pack (5) $202.95; Lab pack (15) $548.95; Site license (25) $809.95.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 25 MHZ 486 or faster, 10MB hard drive space, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, Windows-compatible sound card with microphone input (required for record and playback), SVGA monitor, 256 colors, mouse;
Macintosh System 7.0.1 or later, 33 MHZ 68040 or faster, 10MB hard drive space, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, 13" monitor, 256 colors, mouse, microphone (required for record and playback).

Magazine Reviews: *Computer Paper* (Vancouver B.C.), December 1996; *Technology & Learning*, December 1996; *Children's Bookwatch*, December 1996.

Description: This **interactive activity program** continues the adventures of Reader Rabbit, Sam the Lion, and Matt the Mouse as they search for Sam's imagination in 15 reading lands made up of sequenced, multilevel activities. These familiar friends are joined by a host of newcomers including Buster the Car, Sparky the Imagination, and Booker T. Frog. Each activity builds on newly learned skills as children read, listen, respond, click on animated "hot spots," and think their way through *Interactive Reading Journey 2*. Children strengthen reading skills with the 30 original storybooks featured in the program. The storybooks are also provided in soft cover print versions. In addition, 60 thought-provoking questions invite children to voice their ideas about the stories and their experiences. A unique record and playback feature helps children develop reading confidence and expression.

Tips: *Children's Software Revue* evaluators say that they were "impressed with this program" but caution that it moves at a fairly brisk pace. These evaluators conclude that this program is best suited for a "child who likes structure and can acquire new skills quickly." Florida Department of Education evaluators call this program fun and progressively challenging. "Highly motivating," adds the evaluator from Jefferson County Public Schools.

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- *Children's Software Revue*, December 1996/January 1997; Florida Department of Education, 1997/98. **Good** -- Jefferson County (CO) Public Schools 1996/1997.

Storybook Weaver Deluxe!

(CD-ROM: MAC, WIN)

Publisher:
MECC/The Learning Company, Inc.

Copyright: 1994

Grade(s): 1-6

Subject(s): Language Arts
Tools
Writing

Cost (School Edition): $54.95.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 25MHz 486 or faster, 5MB RAM (8MB recommended), 3MB hard drive space, monitor, 256 colors, sound card, mouse, 2X CD-ROM drive, printer (optional); **Macintosh** System 7.1 or later, 5MB RAM (8MB recommended), 3MB hard drive space, 13" or larger color monitor, 2X CD-ROM drive, mouse, printer (optional).

Magazine Reviews: *MacHome Journal*, July 1995 and November 1996.

Description: The objective of this **tool/creative activity** program is to make writing stories more interesting for students. The program provides a framework and illustrations that encourage students to be creative. Included are several story starters that ask students who will be in the story, where the story will take place, when it will happen, what will happen first in the story, and how the story will end. These questions serve as a framework for the stories. The user is given a selection of characters, objects, and colors in order to illustrate stories. Students manipulate sizes and placement of words and graphics. The Teacher's Guide gives classroom ideas for using the program in relation to fairy and folk tales from various cultures and countries. Reading and discussing these multicultural stories encourages the students to write stories about diverse cultures.

Tips: *MultiMedia Schools* states, "This program provides a good writing center for the class that is focusing on writing creative stories or personal narratives. ESL students will benefit from hearing the computer 'read' selected parts or the entire story aloud. In addition, stories can be read in English or Spanish."

Evaluator Conclusions: **Excellent** -- Developmental Software Awards, 1997; *Learning Magazine's* Teacher's Choice Awards, January/February 1996; Florida Department of Education, 1996/97; *MultiMedia Schools*, May/June 1996. **Good** -- ISTE Educational Software Evaluation Consortium, 1997; Prince George's County (MD) Public Schools, 1997.

Title Originally Appeared in *Only the Best*, 1997

Ultimate Writing & Creativity Center

(CD-ROM: MAC/WIN/WIN95 Hybrid)

Publisher:
The Learning Company, Inc.

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): 2-5

Subject(s): Language Arts
Writing
Tools
Arts

Cost (School Edition): $69.95; Lab pack $157.95; Lab pack (15) $426.95; Site license (25) $629.95; Network edition $629.95.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 33 MHZ 486 or faster, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, Windows- compatible sound card, SVGA monitor, 256 colors, mouse, printer (optional);
Macintosh System 7.01 or later, 33 MHZ 68040 or faster, 12MB RAM (Power Macintosh must have 16MB RAM), 2X CD-ROM drive, 256 colors, mouse, printer (optional).

Magazine Reviews: *Chicago Tribune*, November 26, 1996; *Dallas Morning News*, March 31, 1997; *Parenting*, April 1997; *MacHome Journal*, September 1997.

Description: This **writing program** offers a full-featured word processor, a painting and creativity program, and a multimedia presentation theater. Children can work through the writing process by starting in a "prewriting area" where story and project ideas are presented, and then they can move through subsequent drafting, revising, and editing sections. Students have access to all the easy-to-use tools they need to write and present reports, newsletters, storybooks, signs, and journals. Developed by educators and writing specialists for children ages 6 to 10, *Ultimate Writing & Creativity Center* offers tools and inspiration in an environment that encourages students to write, gain confidence, and develop a love of writing.

Tips: Evaluators from *Technology Connection* highly recommend this program, saying it "blends nicely with the writing process approach and gives students the opportunity to create final pieces and multimedia presentations." *Technology & Learning* evaluators describe this program as "a great esteem builder." The *Dallas Morning News* concludes that this program is "Broderbund's *Kid Pix* and Microsoft's *Creative Writer* combined, plus the power of a well-oiled word processor."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- Florida Department of Education, 1996/97; *Technology Connection*, December 1997. **Good** -- Binghamton (NY) City School District, July 1997; North Carolina Department of Education (*School Library Journal*, December 1997); *Technology & Learning*, November/December 1997.

Words Around Me

(CD-ROM: MAC/Power MAC/WIN/WIN95 Hybrid)

Publisher:
Edmark Corporation

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): PreK-4

Subject(s): Language arts
Vocabulary
ESL
Early Childhood

Cost (School Edition): $399.95; Lab pack (10) $799.95; Site license (30) $180.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 486 or faster, 5MB hard drive space, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, Windows-compatible sound card, SVGA monitor, 256 colors, mouse; **Macintosh** System 7.01 or later, 68040 or faster, 4MB RAM (5MB RAM for System 7.5 or later), 2X CD-ROM drive, 256 colors, mouse.

Magazine Reviews: *DIRECTIONS: Technology in Special Education*, September 1996; *Learning and Leading With Technology*, October 1996; *Electronic Learning*, December 1996; *Instructor*, February 1997; *Closing the Gap*, March 1997.

Description: This **interactive activity program** helps students learn 275 common vocabulary words--as well as 186 plurals--for people, places, things, and actions. With help from an encouraging character named Greenie, students learn to associate spoken words with a variety of visual representations, including photographs, drawings, and animations. Students progress through a sequence of five activities to learn the vocabulary words and develop visual perception, memory, listening, categorization, and comparison skills. Four review games provide reinforcement. A flexible management system allows teachers to customize the program for students of different ages and abilities; words can be taught in English and Spanish. *Words Around Me* is especially appropriate for students with special needs, students learning English as a second language, and early learners.

Applications for Diverse Learners: This program is compatible with Edmark's *TouchWindow* and includes built-in scanning for single switch users.

Tips: A "teacher alert" flashes on-screen when a student needs help or completes a section. On-screen help allows students to review or look up a particular word. Evaluators at *Technology Connection* note that this program is easily customizable for students of different ages and abilities and can be used to track student progress. These evaluators call the program, "easy to use, colorful, and appealing for students, especially those with special learning needs in vocabulary development."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- *Technology Connection*, April 1998. **Good** -- *Technology & Learning*, 1997; North Carolina Department of Education (*School Library Journal*, December 1997); California Instructional Technology Clearinghouse, 1998.

Writer's Solution

(CD-ROM: MAC, WIN; VIDEODISC)

Publisher:
Prentice Hall, Inc.

Copyright: 1997

Grade(s): 7-12

Subject(s): Language Arts
Writing

Cost (School Edition): *Writing Lab* or *Language Lab* CD-ROM, $199; *Writing Lab* and *Language Lab* CD-ROMs $249; Classroom package with CD-ROMS and *Writer's at Work* laser disc $995; Lab pack (30) $5,900.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 486 or faster, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, Windows-compatible sound card, VGA monitor, 256 colors, mouse; **Macintosh** System 7.0 or later, LC II or faster, 8MB RAM (4MB free), 2XCD-ROM drive, 13" monitor, 256 colors.

Description: This **interactive writing program** teaches the writing process and grammar skills in an imaginative writing environment. An annotated teacher's edition ties together all components of the program and demonstrates how to incorporate them into the classroom. The *Writing Lab* CD-ROM explores major kinds of writing: descriptive, expressive, expositive, creative, and narrative. The *Language Lab* CD-ROM offers interactive lessons and practical writing exercises. The *Writer's at Work* laser disc features full-motion video interviews with nine contemporary authors. A student source book includes instructional materials and activities. The program provides teachers with a full year's writing course--including classroom management techniques and short- and long-term assessment options that can be individualized to fit all learning levels and styles.

Tips: A *MultiMedia Schools* evaluator notes that "navigating is as easy as clicking a mouse. Each screen is well organized with a consistent look and feel." This evaluator adds, "The package has an abundance of information, perfect for conducting lessons with the whole class or tutorials for individual students." The evaluator acknowledges that *Writer's Solution* carries a hefty price tag, but notes that stand-alone CD-ROMs are available for a reasonable price. Whether you buy one CD-ROM or a more expensive package, the evaluator notes, "You will not be disappointed."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- Florida Department of Education, 1997/98; *MultiMedia Schools*, March/April 1997; Prince George's County (MD) Public Schools, 1997.
Good -- Software Publishers Association's Excellence in Software Awards (the Codies), 1997.

Cornerstone Mathematics

(CD-ROM: MAC/WIN/WIN95 Hybrid; DISKETTE: MAC)

Publisher:
SkillsBank Corporation

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): 3-8

Subject(s): Mathematics

Cost: $129 per level, $387 for all three levels; Lab pack (5) $774; Site license (50) $2,985; Site license (unlimited) $4,479.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 66MHz 486 or faster, 4MB RAM (16MB for WIN95), CD-ROM drive or 3.5" high-density drive, Windows-compatible sound card (optional); **Macintosh** System 7.0 or later, 68030 or faster, 4MB RAM (16MB RAM recommended), 256 colors, mouse.

Description: This **drill and practice program** interactively presents and reinforces basic mathematics skills: numbers, computation, decimals, fractions, and graphs. Five-step lessons adapt to students' abilities--remedial through advanced--and help them review, practice, and enrich their basic mathematics skills. More than 80 stimulating lessons are designed to support the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) curriculum and evaluation standards.

Tips: Evaluators at *Technology and Learning* like this program because "time-consuming record keeping and other paperwork are virtually eliminated with the program's built-in diagnostic features and progress report generator." *Technology Connection* evaluators add that the program allows the teacher to choose different difficulty levels for each student and can be used to "prepare an impressive array of reports for students, parents, and administrators." Other evaluators agree that *Cornerstone Mathematics* is a valuable tool for teachers to use as a supplement to other curricular materials.

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- *Learning Magazine* Teacher's Choice Awards, 1997. **Good** -- Prince George's County (MD) Public Schools, 1997; *Technology & Learning*, November/December 1996; *Technology Connection*, September 1997.

Math Blaster: In Search of Spot

(CD-ROM: MAC/WIN/WIN95 Hybrid)

Publisher:
Davidson & Associates, Inc.

Copyright: 1993

Grade(s): 1 - 6

Subject(s): Mathematics
Problem Solving

Cost (School Edition): $57; Lab pack (5) $135; Site license (15) $325.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 33 MHZ 386 or faster, 4MB RAM (8MB RAM recommended for Windows95), 2X CD-ROM drive, sound card (required for speech and sound effects), SVGA or VGA graphics, mouse; **Macintosh** System 7.0 or later, LC or faster, 4MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, 13" monitor, 256 colors.

Magazine Reviews: *Family Life*, March/April 1995; *GW2K: The Gateway Magazine*, Summer 1995.

Description: This **interactive activity program** teaches students problem solving and mental math skills. The game challenges students to help Blasternaut rescue Spot, a space character who has been captured by Blasternaut's enemy, Trash Alien. This story line is integrated into four math activities that focus on mental math, basic math facts, and problem-solving. Activities include Trash Zapper, in which students find the missing value in each math problem and earn tractor beams to collect the trash from outer space; Math Blaster, in which students choose the correct answer to the math problem on the Trash Alien's spaceship; and Cave Runner, in which students look at the number on Blaternaut's spacesuit and maneuver him through space, where his number fits between the rocky platforms of the cave. Students develop math skills, including addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, and estimation, and learn about fractions, decimals, percents, and number patterns. Activities have six difficulty levels that can be adjusted.

Tips: Jefferson County evaluators call *Math Blaster* "highly motivating" and say it "eases teacher management" by allowing teachers to work with individual students. Evaluators from the Florida Department of Education suggest this program challenges students of all abilities.

Evaluator Conclusions: **Excellent** -- Florida Department of Education, 1997/98; Jefferson County (CO) Public Schools, 1995/96. **Good** -- ISTE Educational Software Evaluation Consortium, 1997.

Math for the Real World

(CD-ROM: MAC/WIN/WIN95 Hybrid)

Publisher:
Davidson and Associates, Inc.

Copyright: 1997

Grade(s): 5-8

Subject(s): Mathematics
Problem Solving

Cost (School Edition): $57; Lab pack (5) $135; Site license (15) $325.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 486 or faster, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, Windows-compatible sound card, SVGA monitor, 256 colors, mouse; **Macintosh** System 7.1 or later, 68040 or faster, 8MB hard drive space, 12MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, 256 colors, mouse.

Magazine Reviews: *Curriculum Administrator*, October 1997; *Kidz Stuff*, October 1997; *Family PC*, October 1997; *MacAddict*, October 1997.

Description: This **interactive activity program** shows students how mastering math leads to real-life success. Students hit the road with a hot new band on one of two 10-city tours. They guide the band to succeed and be profitable, on time, well-fed, and headed in the right direction. Students build math skills in areas such as logic, time management, money, percents, and measurement as they help the band climb the charts and earn the chance to produce a multimedia music video. The math difficulty adjusts to students' skill levels throughout the game. A friendly, accessible reference library explains the "how-to's" of every problem. No game is ever the same--more than 4,000 word problems and random events will make students want to play again and again. Six original theme songs let students choose the band's music style.

Tips: According to *Children's Software Revue* evaluators, "Kids generally loved the goofy characters, the road-trip theme, and found the problems to be challenging and fun." These evaluators note, however, that some of their younger testers struggled with a few of the problems. Prince George's evaluators say this program provides "an excellent example of the real-world application of math skills."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- *Children's Software Revue*, September/October 1997; Prince George's County (MD) Public Schools, 1997. **Good** -- Binghamton (NY) City School District, July 1997.

MathKeys: Unlocking Fractions & Decimals 3-6

(CD-ROM: MAC/WIN)

Publisher:
The Learning Company, Inc.

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): 3-6

Subject(s): Mathematics
Problem Solving

Cost (School Edition): $69.95; Lab pack $157.95; Site license $441; Site license $629.95.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 486 or faster, 4MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, Windows-compatible sound card, SVGA monitor, 256 colors, mouse; **Macintosh** System 7.0 or later, 68020 or faster, 4MB RAM (5MB RAM for System 7.5), 256 colors, mouse.

Description: This **drill and practice program** demonstrates the relationships between fractions and decimal quantities and allows students to experiment visually with reducing fractions. Students discover the concept of rational numbers--fractions, decimals, ratios, and proportions--by using counters, bars, circles, and other manipulatives. A notepad feature allows students to record their findings. This program is available in both English and Spanish.

Tips: *Technology Connection* evaluators call this program an "excellent example of how technology can help us expand our students' understanding of basic mathematical concepts and increase their mathematical literacy." These evaluators particularly liked the use of music in the program, noting, "Music is used to represent different lengths of time so that students can experience fractions in another manner." Binghamton evaluators describe the activities as "colorful" but suggest that many of the options "take some time to learn."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- Florida Department of Education, 1997/98; *Technology Connection*, December 1997. **Good** -- Binghamton (NY) City School District, March 1997.

MathKeys: Unlocking Measurement K-2

(CD-ROM: MAC, WIN)

Publisher:
The Learning Company, Inc.

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): K-2

Subject(s): Mathematics
Problem Solving

Cost: $69.95; Lab pack (5) $157.95; Site license (MAC or WIN) $441; Site license (MAC and WIN) $629.95.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 486 or faster, 4MB RAM (8MB RAM for Windows 95), 2X CD-ROM drive, Windows-compatible sound card, SVGA monitor, 256 colors, mouse; **Macintosh** System 7.0 or later, 68020 or faster, 4MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, 256 colors, mouse.

Description: With this **interactive exploration program**, students discover the concepts of linear and area measurement by comparing and measuring on-screen objects and shapes. Employing a variety of nonstandard and standard units, students measure length, area, and perimeter. Three games test student knowledge. A notepad feature allows students to record their findings. This program is offered in both English and Spanish.

Tips: Highly recommending this software, an evaluator for *Technology Connection* calls it "a powerful tool in mathematics education." Binghamton evaluators note that the program's many icons take time to learn but add that this program "uses lots of colorful manipulatives including an activity that measures nonstandard units such as pennies and paper clips."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- Florida Department of Education, 1997/98; *Technology Connection*, December 1997. **Good** -- Binghamton (NY) City School District, March 1997.

MathKeys: Unlocking Measurement 3-6

(CD-ROM: MAC, WIN)

Publisher:
The Learning Company, Inc.

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): 3-6

Subject(s): Mathematics
Problem Solving

Cost: $69.95; Lab pack (5) $157.95; Site license (MAC or WIN) $441; Site license (MAC and WIN) $629.95.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 486 or faster, 4MB RAM (8MB RAM for Windows 95), 2X CD-ROM drive; Windows-compatible sound card, SVGA monitor, 256 colors, mouse; **Macintosh** System 7.0 or later, 68020 or faster, 4MB RAM (5MB RAM for System 7.5), 2X CD-ROM drive, 256 colors, mouse.

Description: This **interactive exploration program** lets students use standard as well as nonstandard tools and systems of linear and angle measurement. Students create and manipulate closed shapes to explore the relationships between area, perimeter, segment lengths, and angle measures. While completing the various activities, students must stop frequently to explain their actions and outcomes. A notepad feature allows students to record their findings. This program is available in both English and Spanish.

Tips: The evaluators at the Binghamton (NY) City School District note that "Once teachers learn how to use these *MathKeys* programs, they will have a powerful tool for students to learn important math concepts in an open-ended format." An evaluator for *Technology Connection* says that this particular program does a good job of linking to the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) standards. However, the evaluator notes that this version is "considerably more difficult than the K-2 version."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- Florida Department of Education, 1997/98; *Technology Connection*, December 1997. **Good** -- Binghamton (NY) City School District, March 1997.

MathKeys: Unlocking Probability K-2

(CD-ROM: MAC, WIN)

Publisher:
The Learning Company, Inc.

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): K-2

Subject(s): Mathematics
Probability

Cost (School Edition): $69.95; Lab pack (5) $157.95; Site license (MAC or WIN) $441; Site license (MAC and WIN) $629.95.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 486 or faster, 4MB RAM (8MB RAM for Windows 95), 2X CD-ROM drive, Windows-compatible sound card, SVGA monitor, 256 colors, mouse; **Macintosh** System 7.0 or later, 68020 or faster, 4MB RAM (5MB RAM for System 7.5), 2X CD-ROM drive, 256 colors, mouse.

Description: This **interactive exploration program** introduces students to the world of probability. Students learn how probability works by electronically flipping coins, rolling cubes, spinning tops, and drawing marbles from an on-screen bag. Open-ended exploration at different levels accommodates students' learning progress. The program automatically creates graphs and charts to visually demonstrate how probability works. Extensive teacher resources include learning objectives, activities, guidelines for teachers, and student handouts.

Tips: A judge with the Developmental Software Awards calls this program "appropriate for older children who are just learning about probability" and adds that it is an "excellent classroom learning experience . . . which provides children hands-on experiences." Evaluators at the Florida Department of Education comment that this program "encourages open-ended exploration at different levels to accommodate different abilities and allows students to progress at their own pace."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- Florida Department of Education 1997/98; Developmental Software Evaluations, 1997.

Mighty Math Calculating Crew

(CD-ROM: MAC/Power MAC/WIN/WIN95 Hybrid)

Publisher:
Edmark Corporation

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): 3-6

Subject(s): Mathematics
Problem Solving

Cost (School Edition): $59.95; Lab pack (5) $159.95; Site license $599. District license available.

Hardware Requirements: **Windows** 3.1 or later, 33MHz 486 or faster, 5MB hard drive space, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, sound card, SVGA display, 256 colors (printer and TouchWindow optional); **Macintosh** System 7.01 or later, 68040 or faster, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, 256 colors (printer and TouchWindow optional).

Magazine Reviews: *Closing the Gap*, March 1997; *Children's Software Review*, January 1997; *Instructor*, April 1997.

Description: This **interactive activity program** helps students to understand the concepts behind math facts and to master the thinking skills necessary for successful problem solving. With the Mighty Math calculating crew--Wanda Wavelet, Dr. Gee, Captain Nick Knack, Bill, and Penny--students work through four exciting activities. Students learn and use math skills to recover stolen treasures, deliver essential supplies to a distant planet, examine 2-D shapes and 3-D solids, and help the math heroes save their city from catastrophe. *Mighty Math Calculating Crew* has a question-and-answer mode with cuing, prompts, and guidance. The program supports self-directed learning through student exploration and experimentation.

Applications for Diverse Learners: The program provides auditory support for questions and explanations and can be used with the Edmark *TouchWindow*. Scanning is available in several activities for single-switch users.

Tips: Jefferson County (CO) evaluators remark that *Mighty Math Calculating Crew* "disguises skill-building exercises behind fun, creative activities that students enjoy." Some advantages they note are that the program "automatically records progress and adjusts level to ability. Interactive manipulatives connect concrete and abstract concepts effectively." They particularly like the geometry and money estimating activities. Jefferson County evaluators find the program "highly motivating." They recommend it be used in direct instruction, one-on-one, and small groups.

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- Binghamton (NY) City School District, May 1997; Jefferson County (CO) Public Schools, 1996/97.

Mighty Math Cosmic Geometry

(CD-ROM: MAC/Power MAC/WIN/WIN95 Hybrid)

Publisher:
Edmark Corporation

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): 7-10

Subject(s): Mathematics
Problem Solving
Geometry

Cost (School Edition): $59.95; Lab pack (5) $159.95; Site license $599. District license available.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 33MHz 486 or faster, 9MB hard drive space, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, sound card, SVGA monitor, 256 colors; **Macintosh** System 7.0.1 or later, 68040 or faster, 5MB hard drive space, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, 13" or larger monitor, 256 colors.

Magazine Reviews: *Curriculum Administrator*, January 1997; *Closing The Gap*, March 1997.

Description: This **interactive activity program** helps students understand math concepts and master thinking skills. In *Mighty Math Cosmic Geometry*, students fly through a galaxy to an abandoned city on a faraway planet that once served as a research outpost for mathematicians. They navigate around the planet surface and meet Dodeca, Hexa, Icosa, Tetra, and Octa, characters who guide them through five challenging activities. Students explore attributes of shapes and solids, constructions and transformations, 2-D and 3-D coordinates, and the relationships between length, perimeter, area, and volume. In many of the activities, students can save and print their work. A question-and-answer mode offers cues, prompts, and guidance. The program supports self-directed learning through student exploration and experimentation.

Applications for Diverse Learners: This program provides auditory support for questions and explanations and is compatible with the Edmark *TouchWindow*. Scanning is available in several activities for single-switch users.

Tips: *Technology Connection* evaluators note, "*Cosmic Geometry* includes major topics found in the standards recommended by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM)." The evaluators like the "virtual manipulatives" used in the Robot Studio and Tessellation Creation Station activities: "Starting from a partially-built robot, students use translations, rotations, and reflections to assemble their robot on a 2-D coordinate grid and teach it to dance in a 3-D space setting." A Jefferson County (CO) evaluator says that the program "teaches geometry basics, the concepts behind the facts and problem-solving skills." North Carolina evaluators note the following weakness: "The variety of feedback in question-and-answer modes is limited and may become tiresome."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- Jefferson County (CO) Public Schools, 1996/97; *Technology Connection*, September 1997. **Good** -- North Carolina Department of Education (*School Library Journal*, July 1997).

Schoolhouse Rock: Math Rock

(CD-ROM: MAC/Power MAC/WIN/WIN95 Hybrid)

Publisher:
Creative Wonders

Copyright: 1997

Grade(s): 1-5

Subject(s): Mathematics
Problem Solving

Cost: $49.95; Lab pack $119.95.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 486 or faster, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, Windows-compatible sound card, SVGA monitor, 256 colors; **Macintosh** System 7.1 or later, 68040 or Power Mac, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, 13" color monitor, 256 colors.

Description: This **interactive activity program** teaches fundamental math concepts and helps students improve essential skills. Musical math lessons and skill-building activities with Lucky Seven Sampson and his friends focus on addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, geometry, patterns and sequences, estimation, measurement, and problem solving. The program features eight challenging computer activities, dozens of printable activities, 11 original *Schoolhouse Rock* math videos, and five skill levels.

Tips: Jefferson County evaluators suggest that this program "aids in teaching difficult concepts" and is "highly motivating" but caution that the CD-ROM "runs slow!" *Technology & Learning* judges were "impressed with the excellent, very specific feedback" and say the "lively music and beautifully done interactive animations will keep kids coming back for more." The *Children's Software Revue* evaluator notes that the 6-year-old tester found some of the activities a little too challenging and one of the activities was "nearly impossible to carry out." However, this evaluator concludes, "Don't pass this by; even with its weaknesses, the games are fun and challenging."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- Florida Department of Education, 1997/98. **Good** -- *Children's Software Revue*, February/March 1997; Jefferson County (CO) Public Schools, 1996/1997; 1997 *Technology & Learning* Awards, November/December 1997.

TesselMania! DELUXE

(CD-ROM: MAC, WIN)

Publisher:
The Learning Company, Inc.

Copyright: 1995

Grade(s): 3-12

Subject(s): Mathematics
Geometry
Art

Cost (School Edition): $54.95; Lab pack $124.95; Lab pack (15) $337.95; Site license (25) $494.95.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 25 MHz 486 or faster, 4MB RAM, Windows-compatible sound card, SVGA monitor, 256 colors, mouse;
Macintosh System 7.1 or later, 68030 or faster, 5MB RAM, 256 colors, 13" or larger monitor, mouse.

Description: This **interactive exploration program** allows students to discover the beauty of mathematics in a very visual manner. Tessellations--the interlocking images found in M.C. Escher's art--fascinate students of all ages and irresistibly challenge them to create their own. Students learn complex geometric concepts as they experience art and transformational geometry working together. Tessellations can be animated to show how the original designs were created and how they fit together. The enclosed teacher's guide provides learning objectives, classroom ideas, lesson plans, and student handouts. Students can use this program to create tessellations on objects like posters, banners, T-shirts, and puzzles.

Tips: Evaluators from *Technology Connection* say this program "will certainly hold the attention of students. It can serve as a supplement to the math and art curriculums." Evaluators from the North Carolina Department of Education suggest a color printer for the project section and reported no major weaknesses. These evaluators note that this program "can be used to help students explore patterns, develop spatial and visualization skills and practice problem solving." The evaluators caution, however, that this is a teaching-- not a graphics-- program.

Evaluator Conclusions: **Excellent** -- *Technology Connection*, January 1997; Florida Department of Education, 1997/98. **Good** -- North Carolina Department of Education (*School Library Journal*, December 1996); ISTE Educational Software Evaluation Consortium, 1997.

The Lost Mind of Dr. Brain

(CD-ROM: MAC, WIN)

Publisher:
Sierra On-Line

Copyright: 1995

Grade(s): 6-12

Subject(s): Problem Solving
Language Arts
Music

Cost (School Edition): $57.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 486 or faster, 4MB RAM, SVGA monitor, sound card, mouse;
Macintosh System 6.07 or later, 2.2MB RAM, 13" or larger, monitor, 256 colors.

Magazine Reviews: *MacWorld*, October 1995; *PC Magazine*, September 26, 1995 and December 5, 1995.

Description: The objective of this **problem-solving program** is to stimulate thinking skills (such as spatial relations and logic) through a series of puzzles. Dr. Brain accidentally transferred his brain to Rathbone, his laboratory rat. Students try to retrieve the doctor's brain from the rat by solving a series of puzzles. The user explores brain regions that control spatial concepts; verbal, music, and monitoring skills; logic; and memory. Puzzles include mazes, word games, memorization tests, and classical melody scrambles. There are three levels of play--Novice, Expert, and Genius--each consisting of 10 game areas. The areas include the Music Region, File Sorting, Motor Programming, Neural Maze, Train of Thought, Word Surge, Pentode, Cad Construction, Synaptic Cleft, and Dreamland. The student is accompanied throughout the program by Dr. Brain's neurosurgeon niece, Dr. Elaina, and the now-brainy Rathbone. Dr. Elaina helps students with clues while Rathbone tries to disrupt their progress. This CD is the third in the *Dr. Brain* series.

Tips: A *PC Magazine* reviewer (September 26, 1995) warns, "This one is so much fun the kids may have to fight you off for a chance to play." The evaluator from *Children's Software Revue* notes that "kids sign in so that progress is saved over time . . . Because of the sign in feature, this program would work in either a classroom or home setting." This evaluator adds, "The tasks are challenging, fun and do-able."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- American Library Association's 1996 "Best" List (Booklist, March 15, 1996), *Children's Software Revue*, June/July 1995; Developmental Software Awards, 1997; Florida Department of Education, 1997-1998; Software Publishers Association 1996 Excellence in Software Awards (the Codies).

Title Originally Appeared in *Only the Best*, 1997

Maurice Ashley Teaches Chess

(CD-ROM: WIN/WIN95)

Publisher:
Davidson & Associates, Inc./
Simon & Schuster, Inc.

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): 4-12

Subject(s): Problem Solving Tools

Cost: $35.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 66 MHz 486 or faster, 1MB hard drive space, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, sound card, SVGA monitor, 256 colors.

Magazine Reviews: *Home Computing and Entertainment*, June 1996; *Family Fun*, June/July 1996; *Family PC*, May 1996.

Description: This **interactive activity program** is a complete teaching tool and a full-featured chess program. Endorsed by the Professional Chess Association, *Maurice Ashley Teaches Chess* combines an international chess master's teaching style with extensive video coaching, fast-paced interactive challenges, presentation of chess strategies, and video annotated master games. Students can begin their introduction to chess by receiving extensive video coaching advice from Ashley. Ashley uses sports and other real-life analogies to teach students beginning moves through more advanced strategies. After learning the basics, students can face thousands of interactive challenges to sharpen game, strategy, and visualization skills. In Championship Training, Ashley takes students through a series of personalized training sessions to improve chess skills. Three skill levels provide more than 30 hours of interactive learning. In the Play Chess section, students use customized boards with 2-D and 3-D chess pieces. The Master Games section uses "video chalkboard" technology to help students study ingenious moves; Ashley calls the play-by-play from 10 classic master games. Students can retreat to New York in 1956 to experience Donald Byrne and Bobby Fischer's historic match. On-screen buttons allow students to study the master games at their own pace.

Tips: An evaluator for *Children's Software Revue* characterizes this program as "appropriate for beginning and intermediate players using the fundamentals and nuances of chess via 3-D graphics and colorful animations. Even testers with no prior desire to learn chess were drawn into the program by its clear and easy-to-understand explanations. Drills are fun, challenging, and numerous, each with three skill levels."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- *Children's Software Revue*, June/July 1996; Prince George's County (MD) Public Schools, 1997.

Electric Library

(ONLINE SERVICE)

Publisher:
Infonautics Corporation

Copyright: 1997

Grade(s): 3-12

Subject(s):
Reference
Language Arts
History
Social Studies
Business
Economics
Arts
Science

Cost: Site license prices vary according to number of users; averages $4 per student per year.

Hardware Requirements: **Windows** 3.1 or later, 386 or faster, 4MB hard drive space, 8MB RAM; **Macintosh** System 7.0 or higher, 68020 or faster, 4MB hard drive space, 4MB RAM (5MB recommended), MacTCP. For both platforms, also requires a standard TCP/IP Internet connection with dedicated access or a dial-up (PPP or SLIP) connection.

Description: *Electric Library* is a comprehensive online **research service** that provides an extensive full-text database of current and archival information. The program's interface was designed for novice users and also features Boolean searching. The full-text database includes magazines, journals, and newspapers (including *Business Week*, *Time*, *The Economist*, and *Los Angeles Times*); international and domestic newswires; reference and classic books, including two encyclopedias and the complete works of Shakespeare; TV and radio transcripts, including CNN, ABC, and NPR; and maps, photographs, and major works of art from all over the world.

Tips: Jefferson County (CO) Public Schools evaluators note that "*Electric Library* is an easy-to-use, subscription-based research service" and is "highly motivating," "eases teacher management," and "allows change in [the] method of instruction." An evaluator for *MultiMedia Schools* experienced some problems with this service and was "disappointed that [she] was unable to print the search screen to use as an example when training students." She adds, "This problem is minor, though, when compared to the difficulty we had when a keyboard froze or there was some interruption of the service. Whenever that happened, we had to wait 30 minutes for the connection to time out and log off the first student; only then could we reconnect to the service." However, overall this evaluator highly recommends *Electric Library*, noting, "Materials selected fit the needs of our students very well. Each source yields at least 2 years' worth of content and some sources go back for 5 or 10 years . . . . Electric Library offers excellent sources on a wide variety of topics for broad reading and comprehension levels."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- Jefferson County (CO) Public Schools, 1996/97; *Multimedia Schools*, May/June 1997.

Student Reference Library

(CD-ROM: MAC, WIN)

Publisher:
Mindscape, Inc.

Copyright: 1996

Grades: 4-12

Subjects: Language Arts
Social Studies
Mathematics
Music
Science

Cost (School Edition): $89.95; Lab Pack (5) $229.95; $899 for site license (30).

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 486/66 MHZ or higher, 8MB RAM, 6.2MB hard drive space, SVGA monitor, 256 colors, 2X CD-ROM drive, Windows-compatible mouse, MPC-compatible sound card;
Macintosh System 7.1 or higher, 68040 33 MHZ or higher, 8MB RAM, 6MB hard drive space, 2X CD-ROM drive, 256 colors, 13" or larger monitor.

Magazine Reviews:
1997 *Media & Methods*

Description: From hieroglyphics to cybergenics, this **reference tool** helps students with complete, up-to-date, and easily accessible information for research papers, special reports, and everyday homework. Students can quickly browse thousands of in-depth articles, inspiring photos, enriching videos, and stimulating sound clips. They'll find additional research materials and resources online through specially selected sites on the World Wide Web. The program's Easy Export feature organizes their findings into a convenient report format, for use in practically every word processor.

Tips: Highly recommending this software, an evaluator from *MultiMedia Schools* says *Student Reference Library* "made learning fun and exciting; students especially enjoyed the many visual components." *Technology Connection* evaluators note that although most people will need an encyclopedia for in-depth information, this CD-ROM would be a valued addition to any library.

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- Prince George's County (MD) Public Schools, 1997; *MultiMedia Schools*, January/February 1998. **Good** -- *Technology Connection*, May/June 1997.

Amazing Animals

(CD-ROM: MAC/WIN Hybrid)

Publisher:
DK Multimedia

Copyright: 1997

Grade(s): K-3

Subject(s): Science
Biology

Cost (School Edition): $44.95; Lab pack (5) $89.95.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 486 or faster, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, 8- or 16-bit sound card, SVGA monitor, 256 colors, mouse; **Macintosh** System 7.0 or later, 68LC040 or faster, 8MB RAM, 256 colors, mouse.

Magazine Reviews: *Technology Connection,* January 1998; *Emergency Librarian,* September/October 1997; *Media & Methods,* September/October 1997; *Science Books & Films*, October 1997.

Description: From backyard beasts to earth's most exotic creatures, this **interactive exploration program** introduces students to the wonders of the animal world. Henry, a 3-D animated lizard, is the guide to the CD-ROM and hosts an educational tour of the world of animals. Henry encourages children to become animal experts as they learn about animal classification and how animals move, feed, grow, and use their senses. Special features include: spoken text; six games, each with three levels and 120 animals represented; downloadable stationery; masks, sounds, maps, and images; and a link to a special *Amazing Animals* Web site. An interactive resource center offers photos, graphics, sounds, and animal facts.

Tips: There are six games on three skill levels within the program. Students can play these games alone or with a partner, and high scores earn them stickers to paste in the program's Animal Expert Book. A *School Library Journal* evaluator notes that *Amazing Animals* "will be a welcome addition to classrooms and media centers serving young children who can never get enough information about their favorite creatures." Evaluators at *Children's Software Revue* also like this program, noting its reasonable price and content, but warn that *Amazing Animals* "does not shy away from the harsh realities of nature and includes graphic text on how different animals kill and eat their prey."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- Binghamton (NY) City School District, May 1997. **Good** -- North Carolina Department of Education (*School Library Journal*, July 1997); *Children's Software Revue,* June/July 1997; California Instructional Technology Clearinghouse, 1998.

BioLab Frog

(CD-ROM: MAC, WIN)

Publisher:
Pierian Spring Software

Copyright: 1997

Grade(s): 6-12

Subject(s): Science
Anatomy
Physiology
Biology

Cost: $49; Lab pack (5) $209; Lab pack (10) $369; Site license (30) $549.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 66MHz 486 or faster, 10MB hard drive space, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, 8-bit audio, VGA, 256 colors;
Macintosh System 7.1 or later, 25MHZ 68040 or faster, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, 13" monitor, 256 colors.

Magazine Reviews: *Learning and Leading With Technology*, December/January 1998.

Description: This **interactive exploration program** gives students the ability to perform informative investigations through the dissection of a frog and introduces the concepts of physiology and anatomy. Students expand their knowledge with experimentation, illustrations, and discussions about how form relates to function. Each student receives pre-lab instruction, thorough lab simulation, and post-lab reinforcement. This classroom-tested software is built to provide effective instruction in a fun environment. The dissection simulation provides an in-depth lab experience in the physiology of amphibians. Students are provided with the necessary information to explore the external mouth and the digestive, respiratory, circulatory, reproductive, and skeletal systems. A post-lab and final test is given for each system. Graphics and colorful animations illustrate functions that are normally hard to view.

Tips: Binghamton (NY) evaluators say this program is "great for students who can work independently." Highly recommending this software, an evaluator from *Technology Connection* notes that "This thorough simulation could either replace the traditional lab or be used as a pre- or post-lab review for reinforcement." This evaluator encourages biology teachers and school librarians to "jump at the opportunity to try this neat and tidy dissection and learning experience" (Pierian Spring provides a 30-day free trial).

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- Binghamton (NY) City School District, May 1997; Fermilab Lederman Science Center, 1997; *Technology Connection*, January 1998.

Eyewitness Encyclopedia of Space and the Universe

(CD-ROM: MAC, Power MAC, WIN, WIN 95)

Publisher:
DK Multimedia

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): 4-12

Subject(s): Science
Reference
Astronomy
Physics

Cost (School Edition): $54.95; Lab pack (5) $129.95.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 33MHz 486 or faster, 4MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, 8- or 16-bit sound card, SVGA display, 256 colors; **Macintosh** System 7.0 or later, 68LC040 or faster, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, 256 colors.

Magazine Reviews: *Booklist*, November 1,1996; *Children's Software Revue*, June /July 1996; *Curriculum Administrator*, November/December 1996 & June 1997; *Library Journal*, July 1997; *Media & Methods*, November/ December 1996; *Science And Children*, May 1997; *Science Scope*, April 1997; *Technology & Learning*, March 1997.

Description: This **reference tool** provides students with an overview of space observation and exploration from ancient times to the present. The program has 10 sections: The Star Dome, The Universe, History of Astronomy, Observations & Telescopes, Space Race, Space Hardware, Who's Who, Cosmology, Technical Manual, and Quiz Master. The text provided on each topic is explained and demonstrated with animated and narrated displays. The program includes photos, videos, and three-dimensional presentations on space phenomena. The Star Dome shows the night sky during any year and for any location selected, offers World Wide Web links to astronomy sites, and contains Who's Who biographies of astronomers, scientists, and astronauts.

Tips: Jefferson County (CO) evaluators note that the program is "highly motivating" and a "good simulation of experiences which are otherwise difficult to obtain." They suggest the program for direct, one-on-one, lab, and small group instruction. Evaluators for *Technology Connection* find the program's models of space vehicles "impressive" and note that they can be "rotated by the user and labeled." *Technology Connection* evaluators remark, "If there is one flaw, it may be the 'space music' that accompanies parts of the program. While pleasant, the music might be distracting to others in the room." North Carolina evaluators noted weaknesses: "Using the Star Dome search feature can be frustrating . . . Hints provided are not very helpful." However, they liked the Quiz Master activity and accessibility to 21 Web sites.

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- Binghamton (NY) City School District, November 1996; Jefferson County (CO) Public Schools, 1996/97; *Technology Connection*, September 1997. **Good** -- Fermilab Lederman Science Center, October 1996; North Carolina Department of Education (*School Library Journal*, September 1996).

Eyewitness Virtual Reality: Dinosaur Hunter

(CD-ROM: MAC, WIN)

Publisher:
DK Multimedia

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): 5-12

Subject(s): Science
Biology
Earth Science

Cost (School Edition): $29.95.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 33MHz 486 or faster, 4MB RAM, color monitor (640x480), 256 colors, 8- or 16-bit sound card, 2X CD-ROM drive; **Macintosh** System 7.0 or later, 25MHz 68LC040 or faster, 8MB RAM, color monitor (640x480), 256 colors, 2X CD-ROM drive.

Tips: Evaluators for the Binghamton (NY) City School District and *Children's Software Revue* both suggest that users begin with the guided tour to become familiar with navigation and features of the program. North Carolina Department of Education evaluators note that the program text is best suited for middle school students, but that younger students can easily use the visual and narrated areas of the program.

Description: This 3-D **interactive learning adventure** takes students inside a museum, where they learn about 50 different species of dinosaurs. Students wander the halls of a virtual dinosaur gallery and explore exhibits and activities. Clicking on exhibits leads to screens where information appears as text, narrated slides, videos, labeled diagrams, and animation. Students learn about dinosaur anatomy, movement, senses, feeding, and attack and defense skills. The World of the Dinosaurs section explores the development of dinosaurs during the Triassic, Jurassic, and Cretaceous periods. Interactive maps show sites of continental drift and dinosaur finds. Video footage shows the excavation of a Tyrannosaurus Rex in Montana. In an excavation area, students must find and assemble the bones of six dinosaur skeletons. Once assembled correctly, the dinosaurs come to life and roam the museum. Four prearranged tours of selected screens include an introduction to the museum and descriptions of how dinosaurs lived and evolved. An option to create a custom tour is also available. In the museum store, students can download masks, stationery, postcards, labels, and other items. The store also offers six dinosaur screen savers and dinosaur sounds that can be played and downloaded. In all, the program has 650 information screens, 30 interactive consoles, 15 videos, 50 animations, and 470 illustrations. All the topics and videos in the program are searchable from an index. The program includes an Internet start-up kit and free trial subscription to *Dino Online*, the publisher's dinosaur magazine.

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- American Library Association's 1997 "Best" List; Binghamton (NY) City School District, November 1996; Jefferson County (CO) Public Schools, 1996/1997; *Technology Connection*, September 1997. **Good** -- California Instructional Technology Clearinghouse, 1998; *Children's Software Revue*, October/November 1996; North Carolina Department of Education (*School Library Journal*, January 1997).

Title originally included in *Only the Best*, 1997

A Field Trip to the Rainforest

(DISKETTE: Apple, MAC)

Publisher:
Sunburst Communications, Inc.

Copyright: 1991; 1992

Grade(s): 2-10

Subject(s): Science
Biology
Social Studies
Geography

Cost (School Edition):
$59.95. Site license, district, school purchase plan, and Apple Club plan available; contact publisher for further information.

Hardware Requirements:
128K Apple II series color monitor and mouse recommended; 1MB Macintosh black and white; 2MB Macintosh color; requires high density drive and hard drive.

Magazine Reviews: *Electronic Learning*, January 1993; *The Computing Teacher*, November 1992; *Instructor*, April 1992; *Booklist*, February 1, 1992; *School Library Journal*, February 1992; *Science and Children*, May 1992.

Description: The objective of this **creative activity program** is to enable students to learn about and explore a rainforest. Here they can see 70 plants and animals in natural habitats, all accessible with the click of a mouse. Among the options: zooming in for a closer view; changing from day to night; "linking," or seeing the animal in another place; and, in the Macintosh version, consulting the online field guide. A database enables students to compare facts on all creatures or to select a category (e.g., all millipedes). Categories can be sorted and printed. The teacher's guide features 12 activities on ecology. A colorful paperback includes references on rainforests. This program is not copy protected. Teacher management is included on disk.

Tips: A reviewer for *Science and Children* says text and activities are appropriate for grades 3-5, and older students will enjoy the program's exploration aspect. North Carolina evaluators describe it as "fascinating."

Evaluator Conclusions: **Excellent** -- Arizona State University, 1992; Developmental Software Awards, 1997; Baltimore County (MD) Public Schools, 1996. **Good** -- Fairfax County (VA) Public Schools, 1996 and 1995; ISTE Educational Software Evaluation Consortium, 1994/95 and 1992; North Carolina Department of Education, 1992; *Technology & Learning*, October 1991.

Title originally included in *Only the Best*, 1993

GeoSafari Animals

(CD-ROM: MAC/WIN/WIN95 Hybrid)

Publisher:
Educational Insights

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): 3-12

Subject(s): Science

Cost: $29.95.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 33 MHz 486 or faster, 5MB hard drive space, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive (4X recommended), SVGA;
Macintosh System 7.0 or later, 68030 or faster, 5MB hard drive space, 8MB RAM , 256 colors.

Description: This **interactive activity program**, like previous *GeoSafari* titles, is in a quiz game format. The program features 15 different games that cover whales, reptiles, endangered animals, dogs, and more. The game can be played by up to four students at a time. Correct answers are rewarded with pictures and videos of the animals along with "geobytes"--interesting facts about the animal world. Categories include Shark! (match pictures and facts to the right shark name), Animal Hall of Fame (trivia questions on which is the fastest, biggest, loudest, animal), Micro Mysteries (students see a close-up view of an animal and then are given clues to identify the creature), and Endangered Animals (players must match an endangered species with its main threat to survival). Each player who earns a perfect score in all games is awarded a GeoChamp Certificate. Once printed, this certificate can be mailed to Educational Insights' corporate office for inclusion on the GeoSafari Wall of Fame. This program includes a 250-entry printable glossary so that students can gain a better understanding of the animals that they are studying.

Tips: *Children's Software Revue* evaluators note, "This is not just trivia play, but real analysis of information. We were impressed with the variety and depth of the question categories." These evaluators note that students must be able to read to use this program. The publisher notes that *GeoSafari Animals* can be programmed for variable response times to keep games challenging for up to four players.

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- *Children's Software Revue*, December/January 1996/97; *Learning Magazine* Teachers' Choice Awards, January/February 1998.

The Incredible Machine 3.0

(CD-ROM: MAC/WIN Hybrid)

Publisher:
Sierra On-Line

Copyright: 1995

Grade(s): 4-12

Subject(s): Science
Problem Solving

Cost: $19.95.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 33MHz 486 or faster, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM, sound card, monitor, SVGA, 256 colors, mouse; **Macintosh** System 7.0 or later, 4MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM, 13" monitor.

Description: With this **interactive exploration program**, students construct cause-and-effect contraptions with working pulleys, levers, conveyor belts, motors, balloons, and more. Students can use their ingenuity to construct more than 150 different machines that create specified effects. In the "free-form" mode, students can build puzzles from hundreds of active parts and background items. In "head to head" mode, students test their skills against one another.

Tips: Developmental Software Awards evaluators state that the "puzzles children solve vary in difficulty, and children can select game mode to see how fast they can solve puzzles." These evaluators add that this program "teaches children firsthand about cause-and-effect relationships and chain reactions" and "facilitates critical thinking skills, and encourages creative problem solving." Evaluators with *Children's Software Revue* conclude that this program is "ideal for both home or classroom [use] and would fulfill many common science objectives dealing with mechanics."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- Fermilab Lederman Science Center, 1997; Developmental Software Awards, 1998.

Invention Studio

(CD-ROM: WIN/MAC)

Publisher:
Discovery Channel Multimedia

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): 4-12

Subject(s): Science
History
Problem Solving

Cost: $34.95.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 486 or faster, 8MB of RAM (16MB recommended), 8MB hard drive space, 2X CD-ROM drive, Windows-compatible sound card, VGA monitor, 256 colors, mouse; **Macintosh** 7.1 or later, 68040 or faster, 12MB of RAM (6MB free), 2X CD-ROM, 13" or larger monitor.

Description: This **interactive discovery** program enables children to research, design, build, test, and evaluate inventions. Resources on this CD-ROM include a video library, an encyclopedia, and the Brainstormer, which guides students through the scientific process. Other activities in the program include the Garage, where students can mix and match parts of cars or airplanes on a blueprint and then see their invention in real 3-D; Powerhouse, a game in which students try to balance the energy needs of various devices with available power sources such as the sun, wind, water, and gasoline; and Challenge, a section that allows students to choose a problem and create an invention that would solve it. A journal feature is available for taking notes on the inventions and students can save pictures of works in progress.

Tips: Evaluators with *Children's Software Revue* conclude, "In all, this an easy-to-use program that combines learning value with fun." Evaluators at the North Carolina Department of Education note that this program "will be useful in a physical science curriculum as well as in vocational technology classes." However, "students may try to create inventions that are beyond their technical abilities when first entering the labs, so teachers will need to provide guidance and support."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- *Children's Software Revue*, August/September 1996; Developmental Software Awards, 1998. **Good** -- Jefferson County (CO) Public Schools, 1996/97; North Carolina Department of Education (*School Library Journal*, December 1997).

Inventor Labs

(CD-ROM: MAC/Power MAC/WIN/WIN95 Hybrid)

Publisher:
Houghton Mifflin Interactive Corp.

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): 4-12

Subject(s): Science
History
Problem Solving

Cost: $39.99.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 486 or faster, 12MB hard drive space, 16MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, MPC2 compatible sound card, SVGA monitor, 256 colors, mouse; **Macintosh** System 7.0 or later, 68040 or faster, 12MB hard drive space, 16MB RAM (12MB recommended for Power PC), 256 colors, mouse.

Magazine Reviews: *Family PC*, February 1997; *Today's Parent*, February 1997; *MacHome Journal*, June 1996; *Washington Post*, July 8 and Aug. 25, 1996.

Description: Students journey through time with this **interactive exploration program**. Students explore the meticulously recreated laboratories of three of the world's most celebrated inventors: Thomas Alva Edison, Alexander Graham Bell, and James Watt. The laboratories are furnished with historically accurate tools and materials, and filled with the inventors' own notes, sketches, and mementos. Students meet the scientists and discover how their groundbreaking work laid the foundation for the modern world of science. Inventions can be examined from every angle in interactive 3-D. Students can also reenact experiments and explore hundreds of possible outcomes.

Tips: A tool bar allows users to pick up, rotate, and look inside some of the items inside the lab. Although some of the evaluators felt that the graphics move slowly (even on a 75-MHz Pentium with a 4X CD-ROM), overall they felt that the content was very strong. North Carolina evaluators regard this program as "appropriate for student research and for use in classrooms to help students better understand the work of the three famous inventors."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- Fermilab Lederman Science Center, 1997; Software Publishers Association 1997 Excellence in Software Awards (the Codies). **Good** -- North Carolina Department of Education (*School Library Journal*, April 1998).

Message in a Fossil

(CD-ROM: MAC, WIN)

Publisher:
Steck-Vaughn Company

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): K-8

Subject(s): Science
Earth Science
Life Science
Problem Solving

Cost (School Edition): $59.95; Lab pack $137.95.

Hardware Requirements: **Windows** 3.1 or later, 486 or faster, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, Sound Blaster or compatible, SVGA; **Macintosh** System 7.0 or later, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive.

Description: This **interactive exploration program** fosters observation, research, and thinking skills. Students play the part of a paleontologist as they dig up fossils and use evidence to understand how ancient organisms lived. Students choose tools used by real scientists at excavation sites, reconstruct dinosaur skeletons from bone fossils, and re-create the habitats of extinct creatures. With the evidence uncovered, they learn how these extinct creatures looked, what they ate, and how they lived. Using this information, students construct a museum diorama and assemble fossilized remains, gather and analyze data, draw contextual conclusions, and construct prehistoric habits.

Tips: Developmental Software Awards judges enjoyed the Look, Listen and Dig workshop that allows children to view a dig, learn about paleontologists, and discover facts about fossils. *Learning Magazine* evaluators add that this program is "perfect for earth and life sciences study."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- *Learning Magazine's* Teacher's Choice Awards, January/February 1998; Developmental Software Awards, 1998.

Minds on Science: Impact of Discovery

(Videodisc; CD-ROM: MAC, WIN)

Publisher:
Tom Snyder Productions

Copyright: 1995

Grade(s): 6-9

Subject(s): Science
Problem Solving
Social Studies

Cost (School Edition): Videodisc kit $250; CD-ROM $50.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 486 or faster, 4MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, Windows-compatible sound card, SVGA monitor, 256 colors, mouse; **Macintosh** System 7.1 or later, 68020 or faster, 4MB RAM (5MB RAM for System 7.5), 256 colors, mouse.

Description: This **interactive activity program** is one of three in the *Minds on Science* series. Students explore the dynamic relationship between science, technology, and society. In the activities, students become research scientists who have discovered a compound that will improve memory. Students learn the implications of this discovery by watching a dramatic simulation, role-playing as experts, analyzing data, and weighing courses of action. Working in groups of four, students must determine the best use of their new discovery. The consequences of their decisions are revealed in one of three videos that are tailored to each different decision. The classroom kit includes a single-sided videodisc with video library, 28 student portfolios, a teacher's guide with lesson plans, and extension activities.

Tips: This program stresses cooperative learning and can be covered in about a month's time, one to two weeks on the main activity and two weeks on the extension activities. Evaluators at *MultiMedia Schools* say the program "provokes some very creative thinking, many shared learning experiences, and exciting class discussions as students wrestled with the implications of their decisions." These evaluators add, "our students found the *Impact of Discovery* to be a rewarding educational experience and so will others. Outstanding . . . a must buy!"

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- Fermilab Lederman Science Center, 1997; *MultiMedia Schools*, March/April 1996.

One Small Square: Seashore

(CD-ROM: MAC/Power MAC/WIN/WIN95 Hybrid)

Publisher:
Theatrix Interactive, Inc.

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): 3-7

Subject(s): Science
Biology

Cost (School Edition): $34.95; Lab pack (5) $119.95; Site license (30) $599.95.

Hardware Requirements: **Windows** 3.1 or later, 25MHz 486 or faster, 4MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, Sound Blaster or compatible sound card, SVGA graphics, microphone (optional); **Macintosh** System 7.01 or later, 68030 or faster, 4MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, 13" color monitor or larger, 256 colors.

Description: With this **interactive exploration program**, students investigate life science concepts, including adaptation, systems and interactions, scale and structure of ecosystems, and classification of plants and animals. Basic skills of observation, data notation, and research are developed. Students use a 3-D viewer to explore a sandy or rocky shore during the day or at night. The program features 115 videos from BBC-TV. Experiments are suggested and a list of tools and equipment required for firsthand observations at the seashore is provided. A field guide database provides text and visual information about individual plants and animals.

Tips: *MultiMedia Schools* evaluators say that this program is easy to use and "eye catching," and note that it has "enough variety to keep the students exploring." North Carolina Department of Education evaluators suggest using this "delightful" program "in classrooms studying the ecology of saltwater environments." They caution use by younger students, saying they "may need assistance in reading the small print of experiment directions." "An excellent resource . . . a good edition for a school library for both curricular and general interest needs," says a *Technology Connection* evaluator. However, this evaluator did note some difficulty in getting the CD-ROM to run on his home PC and says no response was given when he sent e-mail to tech support.

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- *Multimedia Schools*, September/October 1997. **Good** -- North Carolina Department of Education (*School Library Journal*, March 1997); Software Publishers Association 1997 Excellence in Software Awards (the Codies); *Technology Connection*, September 1997.

Rainforest Researchers

(CD-ROM: MAC/WIN Hybrid)

Publisher:
Tom Snyder Productions

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): 5-8

Subject(s): Science
Social Studies
Problem Solving

Cost (School Edition): $249.95; Lab pack (5) $349.95.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or higher, 486 or faster, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, color monitor (640x480), 256 colors; **Macintosh** System 7.0 or later, 68030 or faster; 3MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, color monitor (640x480), 256 colors.

Tips: Evaluators for the North Carolina Department of Education find this program to be "an excellent choice for substantive interdisciplinary units in middle schools," noting that "besides science topics, program activities address cooperative learning goals and National Science Education Standards." *Technology and Learning* evaluators describe it as "an excellent program for encouraging students to cooperate and think critically."

Description: This **simulation/exploratory** program engages students in a collaborative research effort that focuses on scientific issues such as biodiversity, taxonomy, ecology, conservation, plant anatomy, and chemistry--all from the perspective of Indonesian rainforests. Through this unique classroom experience, students will examine actual, cutting-edge research regarding tropical forests and biodiversity; explore and utilize methods for managing biological resources; and discover the critical functions plants perform for life on Earth. Students work in cooperative teams of four at a single computer or workstation, where each member assumes the role of a scientific expert. Teams work to complete two challenging assignments by alternating between turns at the computer--where they observe authentic live-action video, analyze data, make decisions, and review their progress and participate in offline activities including reading, research, and discussion. Computer-generated evaluations are given to the student teams based on their critical analysis, problem-solving, and decision-making skills as applied to their performance in hands-on experiments and scientific inquiries. Suggestions for computer use, evaluation, and group management are included in the guide, and on-screen help is always available.

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- American Library Association's 1997 Booklist; Fermilab Lederman Science Center, 1996; *MultiMedia Schools*, September/October 1997; Software Publishers Association 1996 Excellence in Software Awards (the Codies). **Good** -- North Carolina Department of Education (*School Library Journal*, November 1996); *Technology & Learning*, November/December 1996.

Title originally included in *Only the Best*, 1997

Scholastic's The Magic School Bus Explores the Age of Dinosaurs

(CD-ROM: WIN)

Publisher:
Microsoft Corporation

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): 1-5

Subject(s): Science

Cost (School Edition): $29.95.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 486 or faster, 6MB hard drive space, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM, Windows-compatible sound card, SVGA monitor, 256 colors, mouse, 8-bit headphones or speakers.

Description: This **interactive activity program** takes students on a journey back in time to explore the world of dinosaurs. Students explore seven different locations in three prehistoric time periods: Triassic (Argentina, Arizona), Jurassic (Colorado, Tanzania, Tethys Sea), and Cretaceous (Alberta, Mongolia). The program is based on *The Magic School Bus* book series and PBS television show. Students encounter everything from a Stegosaurus to a Tyrannosaurus Rex as they search for a lost dinosaur. The program has more than 12 games and activities, including Morphasaurus, Fossil Finder, and Dino Madness; all are different each time students play.

Tips: Evaluators from the North Carolina Department of Education say the teacher's guide includes "intriguing science questions and an activity sheet for each adventure that reinforces the science concept objectives." These evaluators also note that the program has multilevel activities and engaging characters. An evaluator at *MultiMedia Schools* notes that the "challenge of this program is in deciding how to best use it in the classroom . . . because [sometimes] all the kids want to do is play the games." This evaluator concludes, "If you are a teacher with dinosaurs in your curriculum and you are willing to spend some time learning how to make the program as purposeful as it is fun, this would be an outstanding purchase."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- Florida Department of Education, 1997/98; *MultiMedia Schools*, November/December 1998. **Good** -- North Carolina Department of Education (*School Library Journal*, December 1997).

Science Blaster Jr.

(CD-ROM: MAC, WIN)

Publisher:
Davidson and Associates

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): PreK-1

Subject(s): Science
Problem Solving

Cost (School Edition): $57; Lab pack (5) $135; Site license $325.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 66MHz 486 or faster, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, Windows-compatible sound card, SVGA monitor, 256 colors, mouse; **Macintosh** System 7.0 or later, 68040 or faster, 8MB hard drive space, 12MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, 256 colors, mouse.

Description: This **interactive exploration program** teaches students to think like young scientists. *Science Blaster Jr.* provides an overall introduction to science and covers topics such as historical science discoveries, sound and sound waves, weather, animal classification, sequencing, and magnetism. As members of the Blaster team, students develop scientific thinking skills as they track data about the weather, learn about sounds, study scale and measurement, and experiment with steam. Activities include Sequencer, in which picture tiles placed in the correct order illustrate natural events; Maze Machine, which challenges children to guide objects through a maze; and Photo Safari, in which children take pictures of various creatures. A teacher-and-parent friendly Mission Mode directs and tracks student progress through three different levels.

Tips: This program includes an activity book with 30 experiments and worksheets that can be printed and distributed to students. An evaluator with *Technology Connection* recommends this program, noting, "This disk [should] be used as an instructional tool for younger students or be used with parents at home as an enrichment activity." The evaluator adds, "This program would also be appropriate for slower or disabled learners." Evaluators note that each program segment is introduced with both written and audio directions. Evaluators enjoyed the variety of this program and the ways it encourages children to become explorers and problem solvers.

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- *Technology Connection*, October 1997; Developmental Software Awards, 1997. **Good** -- North Carolina Department of Education (*School Library Journal*, May 1997).

The Ultimate Human Body 2.0

(CD-ROM: MAC, Power MAC, WIN, WIN 95)

Publisher:
DK Multimedia

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): 4-12

Subject(s): Science
Health
Biology
Reference

Cost (School Edition): $54.95; Lab pack (5) $129.95.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 33MHz 486 or faster, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, 8- or 16-bit sound card, SVGA display, 256 colors, 1MB video RAM; **Macintosh** System 7.0 or later, 68LC040 or faster, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, 256 colors.

Magazine Reviews: *Booklist*, March 1 1997; *Curriculum Administrator*, April 1997; *Emergency Librarian*, March/April 1997; *KLIATT*, May 1997; *Library Journal*, December 1996.

Description: This **reference tool** allows students to take an interactive journey through the human body and combines 3-D graphics, authoritative text, illustrations, and detailed microphotography. This new edition of *The Ultimate Human Body* has three added features: 3-D Body Scanner, Journey Through the Body Quiz, and Body Systems Interaction. Journey Through the Body Quiz takes students on a 3-D journey through the body and is activated by students' answers to quiz questions. The Body Systems Interaction allows two body systems to be viewed in great detail simultaneously; cross-referenced items can be shown on the same screen. Body organs and body systems can be viewed in 3-D by using a scanner. Students can move through the layers of the body, see the movement of the skeletal system in 3-D, and rotate individual organs.

Tips: Jefferson County (CO) evaluators note that the program "aids in teaching a difficult concept" and is "highly motivating." They recommend the program be used in direct instruction, one-on-one, and in small groups. Binghamton (NY) City School District evaluators note the user "can scan all of the body's systems such as skeletal, nervous, or muscular using the scanners" and can see "two systems at once." They add, "A remarkable index lets you focus on topics and features a 3-D video and animation index." The program also allows online access to a health club.

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- Binghamton (NY) City School District, May 1997; Jefferson County (CO) Public Schools, 1996/97.

The Ultimate 3D Skeleton

(CD-ROM: MAC, Power MAC, WIN, WIN95)

Publisher:
DK Multimedia

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): 4-12

Subject(s): Science
Health
Biology
Reference

Cost (School Edition): $44.95; Lab pack (5) $99.95.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 33MHz 486 or faster, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, 8- or 16-bit sound card, SVGA display, 256 colors;
Macintosh System 7.0 or later, 68LC040 or faster, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, 256 colors.

Magazine Reviews: *Children's Software Revue*, August/September 1996; *Electronic Learning*, October 1996; *KLIATT*, November 1996; *RQ*, Summer 1997; *The Science Teacher*, April 1997; *Teaching K-8*, January 1997; *Technology & Learning*, April 1997.

Description: This **reference tool** offers students realistic 3-D images of all 206 human bones. Students click on the bones and skeletal sections to learn about them and to hear the Latin and English name of each individual bone. An "amazing facts" option offers more information on the human skeleton and bones. Students can examine bones or sections of the skeleton up close, see bones from a 360-degree vantage point, and rotate the bones. The text is enhanced by video clips and sound effects. A quiz option challenges students to test their knowledge of skeletal anatomy.

Tips: Jefferson County (CO) evaluators note that the program has "fantastic graphics" and "shows the skeleton in detail from all directions." They recommend the program be used in direct instruction, one-on-one, and in small groups. Evaluators for North Carolina Department of Education note, "The program's design is straightforward, with easy movement back and forth between the views and images." North Carolina noted as the only weakness "terms previously entered in the search dialog box must be deleted by individual letter rather than disappearing as a new term is typed."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- Binghamton (NY) City School District, November 1996; Jefferson County (CO) Public Schools, 1996/97. **Good** -- North Carolina Department of Education (*School Library Journal*, November 1996).

The Way Things Work 2.0

(CD-ROM: MAC/WIN Hybrid)

Publisher:
DK Multimedia

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): 3-12

Subject(s): Science
Physics
Social Studies

Cost (School Edition): $54.95; Lab pack (5) $129.95.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 33MHz 486 or faster, 12MB RAM, 8- or 16-bit sound card, 2X CD-ROM drive, SVGA monitor, 256 colors;
Macintosh System 7.0, 25MHz 68LC040 processor or faster, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, 256 colors.

Magazine Reviews: *Electronic Learning*, December 1996; *THE Journal*, December 1996; *KLIATT*, March 1997.

Description: With this **reference tool**, an updated version of the original *The Way Things Work*, students can learn about hundreds of different machines and easily see the scientific principals behind them. The program includes an A-Z of inventors that provides brief biographies of inventors throughout history. Short animated clips keep students interested in learning more about machines and how they work. Additional features include an introduction to the Inventor's Warehouse by author David Macauley.

Tips: An evaluator from *Technology Connection* notes: "If you have an Internet connection and a browser (Netscape worked well), you can access Mammoth.net, a Web page with more information, stationery, games, and an invention-of-the-month. You can e-mail questions or answer questions posted by others. Publishers' information indicates there are 27 new video sequences, and the Mammoth movie player has been improved. If you don't have the original, get this one!" This program is recommended for use one-on-one and in small groups.

Evaluator Conclusions: **Excellent** -- *Technology Connection*, May/June 1997; Fermilab Lederman Science Center, 1997.

Wide World of Animals

(CD-ROM: MAC/WIN Hybrid)

Publisher:
The Learning Company, Inc.

Copyright: 1995

Grade(s): 5-12

Subject(s): Science
Biology
Social Studies
Geography

Cost (School Edition): $49.95; Lab pack $119.95.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 486 or faster, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, Windows-compatible sound card, SVGA monitor, 256 colors, mouse; **Macintosh** System 7.0 or later, 68030 or faster, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, 256 colors, mouse.

Description: Students learn about more than 700 species with this **interactive exploration program**. The animals are classified according to characteristics such as name, class, biome, country, taxonomy, and status on the endangered species list. The program illustrates the interrelationships between animals and the environment. Students observe animals in their natural habitats, gather facts about animal characteristics, and discover threats to the survival of various species. The program includes text, photos, sound clips, full-screen videos, interactive taxonomy trees, and time-lapse exhibits of changes in the animal world.

Tips: Evaluators enjoy the program's 3-D atlas, which offers 360-degree panoramic views of the earth's biomes and helps to tie the different aspects of the program together. Evaluators at *Technology Connection* comment that transitions between screens ran a bit slow on a 486 computer but that the visuals "were so glorious that even at slower speeds it is worth the wait." These evaluators also note that the program cannot print text only and the deep colors tax the printer's ink supply. Evaluators at *Technology and Learning* remark, "The printed teacher manuals [featuring 30 activities and 19 black line masters] make it an especially good bet for the classroom."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- *Technology Connection*, December 1996; Jefferson County (CO) Public Schools, 1996/97. **Good** -- *Technology & Learning*, November/December 1996.

Adventure Time!

(CD-ROM: MAC, WIN)

Publisher:
McGraw-Hill School Interactive

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): 3-6

Subject(s): Social Studies
Geography
History
Problem Solving

Cost (School Edition): $69; Lab pack (5) $207.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 486 or faster, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, Windows-compatible sound card, SVGA monitor, 256 colors, mouse, Quicktime for Windows 2.1 or later; **Macintosh** System 7.0 or later, 68030 or faster, 8MB RAM, 256 colors, mouse, Quicktime for Macintosh 2.5.

Description: With this **interactive exploration program,** students use tools such as maps, photos, charts, video, diagrams, time lines, texts, and recordings to explore people, places, and things of the past, present, and future. Students master geographical information, learn a broad range of historical facts, develop map-reading and time line comprehension skills, gather data, and create custom multimedia presentations. This program features grade-specific activities for guided exploration with hundreds of customizable maps and thousands of photos, movie clips, charts, and symbols; an interactive search tool; an easy-to-use online notebook for recording information; and paint and stamp tools for creating colorful presentations.

Tips: A *MultiMedia Schools* evaluator notes that "The program is designed to complement the textbook series *Adventures in Time and Place* from Macmillan/McGraw-Hill Publishers; however, it can be used with other social studies programs." This program comes in age-specific versions for students in 3rd, 4th, 5th, or 6th grade. The accompanying documentation has ideas for student projects and activities. Additionally, a report utility allows teachers to keep track of students' progress. The evaluators at *Technology Connection* say this program "fulfills its stated purpose of engaging students in learning geographical information and historical facts in context. It also encourages students to gather and organize facts for their own use and for presentation to others in a logical, thematic order."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- *MultiMedia Schools*, September/October 1997; *Technology Connection*, November 1997.

The American Girls Premiere

(CD-ROM: MAC/WIN/WIN95 Hybrid)

Publisher:
The Learning Company, Inc.

Copyright: 1997

Grade(s): 2-6

Subject(s): Social Studies
U.S. History
Language Arts
Writing
Arts

Cost (School Edition): $69.95; Lab pack (5) $157.95; Lab pack (15) $426.95; Site license (25) $629.95.

Hardware Requirements: **Windows** 3.1 or later, 486 or faster, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, Windows-compatible sound card, SVGA monitor, 256 colors, mouse, printer and microphone (optional); **Macintosh** System 7.1 or later, 68030 or faster, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, 13" or larger monitor, 256 colors, printer and microphone (optional).

Magazine Reviews: *HomePC*, February 1998; *MacHome Journal*, January 1998; *Parenting Magazine*, January 1998; *Computer Shopper*, December 1997; *USA Today*, Oct. 29, 1997.

Description: *The American Girls Premiere* **writing program** allows children to develop and direct their own plays starring any one of five American Girls characters. The CD-ROM encourages creative expression and develops storytelling and writing skills in an environment modeled after girls' play patterns. The program is based on the heroines of The American Girls Collection--Felicity, Kirsten, Addy, Samantha, and Molly--and each character's series of historical fiction books. Historical accuracy provides children with insights into what life was like for girls growing up during five different eras in United States history.

Tips: *Children's Software Revue* evaluators call the program "compelling, but tricky to use." They recommend that teachers or parents take the time to understand the program first and then be on hand to demonstrate for the children. The evaluators also recommend that a microphone be used with this product so that students can record their own dialogue for the play. Binghamton evaluators note that *The American Girls Premiere* characters are miniatures of real actors and look spectacular. An evaluator for *Technology Connection* remarks that the CD-ROM is "the way multimedia should be--creative and interactive."

Evaluator Conclusions: **Excellent** -- American Library Association, 1998; Binghamton (NY) City School District, September, 1997. **Good** -- *Technology Connection*, April 1998; California Instructional Technology Clearinghouse, 1998; *Children's Software Revue*, November/December 1997; Fairfax County (VA) Public Schools, October 1997; North Carolina Department of Education (*School Library Journal*, May 1998).

Byzantine: The Betrayal

(CD-ROM: WIN)

Publisher:
Discovery Channel Multimedia

Copyright: 1997

Grade(s): 7-12

Subject(s): Social Studies
History
Problem Solving

Cost: $49.95.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, Pentium 90 or faster (133 or faster recommended), 16MB RAM, 4X CD-ROM drive, 16-bit sound card, 16-bit color, Direct X5-compatible video card, 1MB video RAM.

Magazine Reviews: *PC Games*, December 1997; *U.S. News & World Report*, Nov. 24, 1997; *Boston Herald*, Nov. 9, 1997.

Description: In this **interactive activity program**, the student plays the role of a journalist invited to Istanbul, Turkey to help uncover an antiquities smuggling ring. Visual and written clues about the history of Istanbul and the Byzantine era help students to solve puzzles within the game. Students must learn to navigate the labyrinth of Istanbul's back alleys, palaces, mosques, and bazaars to get closer to the solution of the mystery. The program features audio and film clips shot on location in Istanbul.

Tips: Bologna New Media Prize evaluators call this "a great-looking and intuitive program which allows children to discover a different city and culture, while thinking about how we treat our world heritage." The evaluators at *Children's Software Revue* note that "The play is hard but engaging and fun, and helpful hints (on screen) are available when you get stuck." The evaluators also note that their testers were all very positive in their evaluations, and many asked to keep the program for an extra amount of time so that they could finish their games.

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- *Children's Software Revue*, January/February 1998; Bologna New Media Prize, 1998.

Chronicle of the 20th Century

(CD-ROM: MAC, WIN)

Publisher:
DK Multimedia

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): 6-12

Subject(s): Social Studies
History
Reference

Cost (School Edition): $54.95; Lab pack (5) $129.95.

Hardware Requirements: **Windows** 3.1 or later, 33MHz 486 or faster, 12MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, 8- or 16-bit sound card, SVGA monitor, 256 colors, 640 x 480 display; **Macintosh** System 7.0 or later, 25 MHz 68LC040 processor or faster, 12MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, 256 colors (640x480 display).

Magazine Reviews: *The Book Report*, November/December 1997; *MultiMedia Schools*, November/December 1997; *Emergency Librarian*, March/April 1997; *Booklist Reference Books Bulletin*, March, 1997; *Computers In Libraries*, January 1997; *KLIATT*, January 1997.

Description: This **reference tool** is a news chronicle based on the best-selling book of the same name. The program takes students on a voyage through events and with people that have shaped the 20th century. Students can access more than 34,000 days of history by exploring the 3-D newsroom that serves as the table of contents of the program. Information is organized by toolbar selections: Calendar, Biographies, 20th Century in Focus, Search, and Chronicle Online. The text is illustrated with 70 videos, 90 archival sound clips, and 3,000 photographs. Students can view news events in chronological order by selecting Calendar and can find biographies of historical figures with Search. Chronicle Online provides access to the *Chronicle of the 20th Century* Web site, which features headline news of the day and trivia games that test knowledge of 20th century events.

Tips: An evaluator from *Technology Connection* finds this to be an "entertaining product and a fine tool for overview, browsing for topics, and beginning research," but cautions that students doing serious research may want to use other resources. The *School Library Journal* evaluator finds that "The solid content and well-chosen multimedia provide an expansive look at history that is both engaging and stimulating." Jefferson County evaluators call the program "highly motivating."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- Binghamton (NY) City School District, May 1997; Jefferson County (CO) Public Schools, 1996/97. **Good** -- *Technology Connection*, May/June 1997; North Carolina Department of Education (*School Library Journal*, March 1997); Fairfax County (VA) Public Schools, October 1997.

Complete Maus

(CD-ROM: MAC, WIN, WIN95)

Publisher:
Voyager Company

Copyright: 1994

Grade(s): 9-12

Subject(s): Social Studies
Language Arts

Cost (School Edition): $49.95; Lab pack (5) $175. Contact publisher for site license pricing.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 33MHz 486 or higher, 8MB RAM, monitor (640 x 480), 256 colors, 2X CD-ROM drive, sound card with speakers or headphones;
Macintosh System 7.0 or higher, 25MHz 68030 processor or faster, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, 13" color monitor, sound card with speakers or headphones.

Description: The objective of this **exploratory multimedia** program is to provide an interactive format that combines the Pulitzer-prize winning works, *Maus I* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986) and *Maus II* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1991), by author Art Spiegelman. The program offers insights into the creation of these graphic novels that chronicle the author's parents' survival of the Holocaust and his life as a child of survivors. *Complete Maus* provides a portable version of the 1992 Museum of Modern Art exhibit that brought together Spiegelman's preliminary sketches, audio tapes, archival posters, photographs, prisoners' drawings, notebooks, commentary, and three hours of audio interviews with the author's father. Users can access video and audio interviews with the author as he discusses the making of *Maus I and II*, commenting on the form, history, and ideas behind his work. The reader has the unique opportunity to move beyond the finished graphic panel to learn sources of the author's information and inspiration as he discusses why he chose to tell the story as a parable of cats and mice, what he left out, and how he shared his father's memories, which at times conflict with historical fact. The story begins with a young mouse named Art who learns the meaning of friendship from his father, and follows Art into adulthood as he interviews his father, switching between past and present scenes. While not meant to be a complete resource for materials about the Holocaust, the program does contain QuickTime footage of Spiegelman's trip to Auschwitz to research his illustrations, maps of Auschwitz and World War II Poland, and an interactive family tree. Material is searchable by keyword, and a zoom feature permits a closer look at the illustrations.

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- Binghamton (NY) City Public School District, September 1997; *History Computer Review*, Fall 1997; Los Angeles (CA) Unified School District, September 1995; *Technology Connection*, April 1995. **Good** -- ISTE Educational Software Evaluation Consortium, 1996.

Title originally included in *Only the Best*, 1997

DISCovering Biography

(CD-ROM: WIN, WIN95)

Publisher:
Gale Research

Copyright: 1997

Grade(s): 9-12

Subject(s): Social Studies
Language Arts
Reference

Cost: Site license (30) $500; Additional user $20.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 386 or faster (80 MHz 486 or faster recommended), 4MB RAM, (8MB RAM or more recommended), CD-ROM drive, VGA, mouse.

Magazine Reviews: *Book Report*, April 1998; *Curriculum Administrator*, April 1997; *Electronic Reference Reviews*, 1997; *Booklist Reference Books Bulletin*, May 15, 1997; *Voya*, December 1997.

Description: This **reference tool** offers multiple search paths so that students can easily discover rich, informative biographies of nearly 2,000 individuals most frequently studied in the classroom. Students can search by any combination of fields, including name, pseudonym or nickname, ethnicity or nationality, gender, date of birth or death, awards, and occupation. Each biography contains a Life and Times section that provides a background of dates, people, and events from the individual's time period in history. A timeline pinpoints important dates and events, giving students greater understanding of the biographee and his or her place in history. Students can print information or save portions of the CD-ROM to a disk. *DISCovering Biography* includes the *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 1997) and a 32-page teacher's guide that includes classroom activities to help acclimate students to the CD-ROM.

Tips: *Technology Connection* evaluators note that students using this CD-ROM found it very easy to use the search functions, including advanced-level searching techniques. The evaluators also note that updates to the more than 2,000 biographies in *DISCovering Biography* are provided during the subscription year. A *MultiMedia Schools* evaluator adds, "The great depth of this database would make it a valuable addition to any collection."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- *Technology Connection*, November 1997; *MultiMedia Schools*, March/April 1998.

First-Start Biography

(CD-ROM: MAC/WIN/WIN95 Hybrid)

Publisher:
Troll Communications

Copyright: 1997

Grade(s): 1-3

Subject(s): Social Studies
History
Language Arts
Reading

Cost (School Edition): $50; Lab pack (10) $299.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 386 or faster, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, Windows-compatible sound card, SVGA monitor, 256 colors, mouse; **Macintosh** System 7.0 or later, 68020 or faster, 8MB RAM, CD-ROM drive, 256 colors, mouse.

Description: This **interactive literature experience** is a series of CD-ROMs that details the lives of 10 historical figures and shows how their childhood experiences influenced their adult lives. Those profiled include Abraham Lincoln, Amelia Earhart, Christopher Columbus, Martin Luther King, and Jackie Robinson. A print version of each biography accompanies the CD-ROMs. Each CD-ROM includes a biography of an individual and several enrichment activities that help to develop vocabulary, promote understanding, and stimulate creativity. A snapshot feature prompts students to take pictures of the screen as they read through the story and later arrange them in chronological order. A time line feature allows students to select a date in the subject's life and hear an extensive oral review of that year. My Own Story allows students to select from a series of pictures and enter a caption or summary for each one.

Tips: Evaluators note that this program is easily customized by the teacher and many of the features can be disabled so that students focus on a particular task. The evaluators at *MultiMedia Schools* find *First-Start Biography* a very helpful reading product. They note that the reading level of the biographies is instructional for 2nd graders and that the content is appropriate for all elementary students. In summary, *MultiMedia Schools* evaluators highly recommend this product, noting it will "enhance student interest in the lives of famous Americans and encourage them to interact with the written and spoken text."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- *Learning Magazine* Teacher's Choice Awards, 1998; *MultiMedia Schools*, May/June 1998.

The Greek and Roman World

(CD-ROM: MAC/Power MAC/WIN/WIN95 Hybrid)

Publisher:
SVE & Churchill Media

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): 9-12

Subject(s): Social Studies
World History

Cost: $70; Lab pack (5) $210.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 486 or faster, 8MB RAM (16MB recommended), 2X CD-ROM drive, sound card, color monitor, 256 colors; **Macintosh** System 7.0 or later, 68030 or faster, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive.

Description: This **reference tool** introduces students to the history of the Greek and Roman civilizations and also illustrates how the Greeks and Romans helped to shape Western civilization. The program includes an overview of the ancient Greeks, both Hellenic and Hellenistic. The program traces the accomplishments of Philip of Macedon and his son Alexander the Great. Students can follow the history of the Roman Empire, from its beginning with Augustus Caesar to the invasion of the Germanic tribes from the North. The program discusses Roman ideals that are still important today: family, appreciation for different cultures, political rights for all people, and the free exchange of ideas. Students discover the Roman influence on the codification of a system of laws, the spread of Christianity, and the valuation of art, sculpture, literature, and architecture. A short multimedia tutorial acquaints users with the features of the program.

Applications for Diverse Learners: Text can be read aloud by the computer, helping students with reading difficulties to gather information.

Tips: An evaluator for *Technology Connection* writes, "The multimedia presentation has links to the encyclopedia and dictionary, so students can find additional information or clarify terms easily. The encyclopedia entries are short, but they do provide information that students need. I would highly recommend this program for all middle and high schools." Prince George's County evaluators suggest using this program with individual students as well as with cooperative groups. They note that the program is, "good for multicultural education. Excellent for thinking skills and dimensions of learning. The content is free of racial, ethnic, gender, and other stereotypes. The learner controls the rate and sequence of presentation and review." However, they note that "there is no written documentation to which teachers can refer."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- Prince George's County (MD) Public Schools, 1996; *Technology Connection*, September 1997.

Imagination Express: Time Trip, USA

(CD-ROM: MAC, WIN)

Publisher:
Edmark Corporation

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): 1-7

Subject(s): Social Studies
Language Arts
U.S. History
Writing

Cost (School Edition): $39.95; Lab pack (5) $139.95; Site license (30) $499.

Hardware Requirements: **Windows** 3.1 or later, 25MHz 386 or faster, 4MB hard drive space, 8MB RAM, color monitor (640x480), 256 colors, 2X CD-ROM drive, Windows -compatible sound output device, mouse, microphone and printer (recommended); **Macintosh** System 7.0 or later, 4MB hard drive space, 8MB RAM, 13" color monitor, 2X CD-ROM drive, mouse, microphone and printer (recommended).

Tips: Developmental Software evaluators note, "This software could be a valuable vehicle for helping children focus on their family and the special stories of their ancestors' lives."

Description: This **creative writing program** allows students to create interactive electronic books and movies set in a fictional New England town. Like other titles in the *Imagination Express* series, this program is designed to help students with language development, whole language writing and reading, theme-based learning, and vocabulary development. Students select scenes, cast characters, develop plots, narrate stories, and write and record dialogue as they create adventures set in one or more time periods. Students choose from backgrounds and stickers that reflect the evolution of U.S. architecture, inventions, fashion, and entertainment from the 1600s to the present. A time machine background can be used to send characters and objects back and forth through time. Students can drag stickers depicting people and props to any place on the screen; the images grow and shrink depending on where they are placed in the scene. Stickers can be animated with action and sound. Students set motion by dragging the stickers and add sound by selecting from provided music and sound clips or by recording their own sound effects. A talking scrapbook offers information about U.S. social history and includes letters and video clips. An options area allows teachers to customize the program menu bar to meet the needs of individual students. A printed teacher's guide offers steps to get started using the software-- a learning opportunities matrix, reproducible student activity sheets, and ideas and tools for introducing classroom activities that reinforce the skills and concepts presented in the software.

Evaluator Conclusions: **Excellent** -- Developmental Software Awards, 1997; Baltimore County (MD) Public Schools, 1996; *Technology Connection*, September 1997; Jefferson County (CO) Public Schools, 1996; **Good** -- *Technology & Learning*, November/December 1996.

Title originally included in *Only the Best*, 1997-98

Neighborhood MapMachine

(CD-ROM: MAC/WIN/WIN95 Hybrid; Diskette: MAC, WIN)

Publisher:
Tom Snyder Productions

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): 1-5

Subject(s): Social Studies
Geography

Cost (School Edition): $79.95; Lab pack $199.95; Network license $599; Site license $799.

Hardware Requirements: **Windows** 3.1 or later, 33MHz 486 or faster, 5MB hard drive space, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, SVGA monitor; **Macintosh** System 7.0 or later, 68030 or faster, 9MB hard drive space, 2MB RAM, 256 colors.

Magazine Reviews: *Electronic Learning*, March/April 1997; *Teaching PreK-8*, April 1997; *Learning and Leading With Technology*, April 1997.

Description: This **interactive exploration program** lets students create, navigate, and print maps of their neighborhoods or imaginary places using roads, trees, buildings, and parks. As students "map out" their towns, they learn essential geography skills such as direction, distance, scale, grid coordinates, and symbols. The program has 36 ready-made maps that can be explored. The program operates in three modes--Create, Explore, and Mystery. Create mode allows students to design maps from scratch. Explore mode lets students use a compass to navigate their own or ready-made maps. Mystery mode lets students follow clues to find items. All the components of this program address skills presented in the national geography standards.

Tips: North Carolina evaluators note that younger students may need assistance in learning the program's features and tools. These evaluators liked the fact that students can add their own house numbers and street names to reflect their neighborhoods. The evaluators at Jefferson County (CO) Public Schools called this "a creative, fun and stimulating program. Kids will enjoy creating and exploring maps. Teachers will enjoy using the program as a 'smart chalkboard'."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- *MultiMedia Schools*, September/October 1997; Jefferson County (CO) Public Schools, 1996/97. **Good** -- North Carolina Department of Education (*School Library Journal*, January 1997); Software Publishers Association's Excellence in Software Awards (the Codies), 1997.

Schoolhouse Rock: America Rock

(CD-ROM: MAC/Power MAC/WIN/WIN95 Hybrid)

Publisher:
Creative Wonders

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): 3-8

Subject(s): Social Studies
U.S. History

Cost (School Edition): $49.95; Lab pack (5) $119.95; Site license (15-30 workstations) $17 per CD; Site license (31 or more workstations) $15 per CD.

Hardware Requirements: **Windows** 3.1 or later, 25MHz 486 or faster, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, sound card, VGA display, 256 colors; **Macintosh** System 7.1 or higher, 68040 or faster, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, 13" monitor, 256 colors.

Description: This **interactive activity program** helps students learn about the history of the United States. In *Schoolhouse Rock: America Rock,* students go on an adventure across America to discover important facts about U.S. history, geography, government, and culture. Students help Bill from "I'm Just a Bill" to become a law, plan the Minutemen's strategy in the key battles of the American Revolution, build the Union Pacific Railway, and help immigrants find their way to Ellis Island. The program features six computer activities, three skill levels, more than 40 printable classroom projects, and 10 award-winning *Schoolhouse Rock* social studies videos.

Tips: Jefferson County (CO) evaluators remark that the program is "highly motivating" and allows for "desirable student-student interaction." They suggest that the program be used with direct, one-on-one, small group, and tutorial instructional methods. An evaluator for *Technology Connection* praises the design of *Schoolhouse Rock: America Rock*: "It is multilevel and seeks to reach a variety of learning styles. Suggestions are given for cooperative learning and other types of group activities on and off the computer . . . There is even a homework component where students are encouraged to involve their families." The evaluator notes that "as comprehensive as this program is, some important areas of American History, such as the Civil War, are not covered, and the order in which the units are presented doesn't necessarily make sense chronologically."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- Jefferson County (CO) Public Schools, 1996/97; *Technology Connection*, October 1997.

Where in Time Is Carmen Sandiego?

(CD-ROM: Power MAC/WIN/WIN95 Hybrid)

Publisher:
Broderbund Software, Inc.

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): 4-12

Subject(s): Social Studies
Geography
History
Problem solving

Cost (School Edition): $59.95; Lab Pack $179.95.

Hardware Requirements: **Windows** 3.1 or later, 66MHz 486 or faster, 2MB hard drive space, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, SVGA monitor; **Macintosh** Power Macintosh required, 7.1.2 or later, 68030 or faster, 2MB hard drive space, 12MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, 256 colors.

Description: Students try to catch Carmen Sandiego and her time-traveling tricksters before they plunder another precious relic in this **interactive activity program**. Students learn about historic events, personalities, and achievements as they embark on 18 historic adventures. They will meet more than 50 fascinating figures--from Christopher Columbus and Leonardo da Vinci to Queen Elizabeth and Thomas Jefferson. The program allows students to explore countless cultures, hunt for clues, and solve intriguing puzzles as they try to foil Carmen's plans to upset history. To dig even deeper into history's greatest cultural, scientific, and political achievements, students are invited to consult the ACME Chronopedia, an electronic reference book accessible from every adventure.

Tips: This program covers 1500 years of world history in an interdisciplinary fashion. A Bologna New Media Prize judge notes that this program "is a fun title where kids learn about history through conversations with everyday people such as a Nile boatman or famous inventors such as Gutenberg. Not the history of facts but of ideas, inventions, explorers, art and politics, all tied up in a great adventure."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- Florida Department of Education, 1997/98; Software Publisher's Association Excellence in Software Awards (the Codies), 1998; Bologna New Media Prize, 1998.

Where in the World Is Carmen Sandiego?

(CD-ROM: MAC/Power MAC/WIN Hybrid)

Publisher:
Broderbund Software, Inc.

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): 4-8

Subject(s): Social Studies
Geography
History
Problem solving

Cost (School Edition): $59.95; Lab Pack $179.95.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 33MHz 486 or faster, 2MB hard drive space, 8MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, SVGA monitor; **Macintosh** System 7.01 or later, 20 MHz 68040, 2MB hard drive space, 8MB RAM (12MB for Power MAC), 2X CD-ROM drive.

Description: Students act as agents for the world-famous ACME detective agency in this **interactive activity program**, a multimedia version of the classic title. Students explore the world's greatest cities as they track down ex-secret agent Carmen Sandiego. Students are guided by more than 1,000 clues on history, the arts, language, currency, and geography. The World Wiz feature contains facts to help students unravel the clues; panoramic scrolling landscapes allow students to scroll 360 degrees through beautifully painted scenery.

Tips: *Technology Connection* evaluators note that this program retains the "slightly offbeat humor of the television program, and still teaches research, reading, map skills, deductive reasoning, world geography, and social studies."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- Florida Department of Education, 1997-98; *Technology Connection,* May/June 1997.

World Discovery Deluxe

(CD-ROM: MAC/WIN)

Publisher:
Great Wave Software

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): 3-12

Subject(s): Social Studies
History
Geography

Cost (School Edition): $59.95; Lab pack (5) $189.95; Site license $795.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 386 or faster, 4MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, Windows-compatible sound card, 256 colors, mouse;
Macintosh System 7.1 or later, 68020 or faster, 4MB RAM, 256 colors, mouse.

Magazine Reviews: *CD-ROM Today*, January 1996; *MacUser*, January 1996.

Description: In this **interactive exploration program**, students build knowledge of countries, cities, capitals, mountains, rivers, lakes, currencies, and flags as well as historical people, places, and events. The program features 12 learning activities and 75 maps from around the world. The names of countries are spoken in both English and native languages, and greetings are presented in languages from around the world. The program also plays national anthems and shows country flags. Students can print maps, save games, and challenge each other to tournaments and relays. A built-in device allows teachers to create their own question sets based on the content of the program.

Tips: A *Technology Connection* evaluator was pleased with the three levels of play that made the program challenging for even the most proficient players. This evaluator notes that the games within the program can be played at the world, national, or state-provincial level, which makes it easy to integrate this program into the curriculum. Evaluators at *Technology & Learning* state that "both teachers and kids will love this game-like, content-rich title, which reinforces geography, history, and economic instruction through a good selection of fast-paced activities."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- *Technology Connection*, December 1997; Prince George's County (MD) Public Schools, 1997. **Good** -- *Technology & Learning*, November/December 1996.

Higher Score for the SAT/ACT

(CD-ROM: MAC/WIN Hybrid)

Publisher:
Kaplan Educational Centers

Copyright: 1997

Grade(s): 9-12

Subject(s): Student Helper

Cost: $29.99; Deluxe version (includes three additional CD-ROMs covering admissions, financial aid, and study skills) $49.99.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 486 or faster, 4MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM drive, Windows-compatible sound card, SVGA monitor, 256 colors, mouse; **Macintosh** System 7.0 or later, 68020 or faster, 16.5MB hard drive space, 8 MB RAM (16MB to run with Web browser), 256 colors, mouse.

Description: This **drill and practice** program combines the power of multimedia with Kaplan's test preparation methods to help students prepare for the SAT and ACT exams. The student begins by taking a short diagnostic test and filling out a personal profile to create a customized study plan that takes into account the student's available study time, abilities, and learning goals. The program then presents multimedia lessons followed by a comprehensive test-taking analysis. The program helps users through the college application process by enabling them to create personalized World Wide Web (WWW) sites. The WWW sites give them information on prospective schools as well as a calendar, checklist, news, and admissions information pertaining to specific schools. WWW sites are updated as relevant information becomes available. This feature can be used each time students log onto the Internet through the software. Other features include multimedia math review lessons, vocabulary flash cards, and links to 600 college WWW sites.

Tips: *MultiMedia Schools* evaluators recommend this program for any high school with "students who are serious about preparing for the PSAT, SAT, or ACT." The evaluators add, "This software could easily replace commercial programs, which can be very expensive." However, *MultiMedia Schools* evaluators warn that the program runs directly from the CD-ROM drive and schools might want to buy more than one copy.

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- *MultiMedia Schools*, March/April 1998; *Technology Connection*, April 1998.

ClarisWorks for Kids

(CD-ROM: MAC)

Publisher:
Apple Computer, Inc.

Copyright: 1997

Grade(s): K-5

Subject(s): Tools
Language Arts
Writing
Mathematics

Cost: $49.99.

Hardware Requirements:
Macintosh System 7.1 or later, 68020 or faster, 30MB hard drive space (150MB for full installation) 8MB RAM (10MB RAM for System 7.5 or 7.6), CD-ROM drive.

Description: From word processing for journals to pie charts for learning fractions to painting favorite animals, this **writing program** helps students with a variety of classroom tasks. The program is tailor-made for younger children--complete with special fonts, an easy filing system, lined paper templates, and large menus. *ClarisWorks for Kids* contains more than 75 creative and educational activities such as writing newsletters, creating multimedia slide shows, painting pictures using clip art, studying graphs, and tracking collections of books, baseball cards, and word lists. The program is designed to help students be productive while still having fun.

Tips: *Children's Software Revue* evaluators find the program "easy to use once we played around a bit. Teachers will especially appreciate the activities section with 50 projects organized by curriculum area . . . on the downside, full installation requires a whopping 150 MB of free hard drive space." An evaluator for *Technology Connection* calls *ClarisWorks for Kids* "a comprehensive program that would be an excellent resource for any elementary classroom or library . . . students will find the database and spreadsheet formats fun and easy."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- *Children's Software Revue*, September/October 1997; *Technology Connection*, February 1998; Software Publishers Association's 1998 Excellence in Software Awards (the Codies).

Kid Pix Studio

(CD-ROM: MAC, WIN)

Publisher:
Broderbund Software, Inc.

Copyright: 1994

Grade(s): PreK-12

Subject(s): Tools
Language Arts
Early Childhood
Arts
Science
Social Studies

Cost (School Edition): $89.95; Lab pack (5) $179.95.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or higher, 4MB RAM, CD-ROM drive, color monitor, sound card;
Macintosh System 7.0 or better, 4MB RAM, CD-ROM drive, color monitor, sound card.

Magazine Reviews: *CD-ROM World*, January 1995; *Electronic Learning*, March 1995; *MacHome Journal*, February 1995; *Macworld*, February 1995; *PC Magazine*, June 13, 1995.

Description: The objective of this **creative tool program** is to provide a multimedia paint and animation program suitable for use by both very young and older students. Built around the publisher's popular *Kid Pix* program, this edition doubles the number of painting tools and adds 100 video clips, songs, and sound effects. Three new animation projects are featured: Moopies are simple tools that allow users to animate their own art and create their own movies, Digital Puppets allows children to use the keyboard to synchronize 10 objects to music or other sounds, and Stampimator allows students to edit any of 800 stamps and animate them along a path defined by the mouse. No reading ability is required to operate the program. Younger children can complete projects like painting a singing birthday card or putting on a digital puppet show, and older students can create animated stories, collages, photo essays, school reports, and full-fledged productions that integrate animation, video, special effects, photos, music, and sound effects. The School Edition includes a teacher's guide with 40 activities that can be integrated into language arts, fine arts, science, and social studies. The program is not copy protected.

Tips: Reviewers and evaluators generally applaud this program. An evaluator for *Technology & Learning* says, "The new animated tools and expanded capabilities of the program are sure to delight Kid Pix fans." A reviewer for CD-ROM World recommends the purchase of this program for "kids who like to doodle."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- Developmental Software Awards, 1997; Florida Department of Education 1997/1998; Prince George's County (MD) Public Schools, 1995; Software Publishers Association 1995 Excellence in Software Awards (the Codies). **Good** -- ISTE Educational Software Evaluation Consortium, 1996.

Title originally included in *Only the Best*, 1996

mPOWER

(CD-ROM: MAC, WIN/WIN95)

Publisher:
Mindscape

Copyright: 1994; 1996

Grade(s): 4-12

Subject(s): Tools
Language Arts

Cost (School Edition): $99.95; Lab pack (5) $249.95; Site License $999.95.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 66MHZ 486 or faster, 14MB hard drive space, 8MB RAM (16MB RAM for WIN95), 2X CD-ROM drive, 256 colors; **Macintosh** System 7.1 or later, 33MHZ 68030 or faster, 10MB hard drive space, 8MB RAM, CD-ROM drive, 256 colors.

Magazine Review: *Curriculum Administrator*, August 1997.

Description: Students create interactive multimedia presentations and reports with this **publishing tool.** Students and teachers use original content or import material from the World Wide Web (WWW) to create, organize, and present reports and interactive projects. Graphics, digital images, live or digital video, sound, photographs, and charts can be added. The program features 64 backgrounds, 25 transitions, over 300 MB of royalty-free sounds, a chart and graph builder, plus hot buttons to control the flow of projects. An Internet launch button makes it easy to transition between *mPOWER* and all the resources of the WWW.

Tips: *Technology Connection* evaluators note that with this program, "Anyone with at least basic computer skills and some understanding of multimedia can create a presentation in under an hour." North Carolina evaluators add that this program is "especially useful for teachers and students who are experienced in media production and would like to create interactive or automated multimedia presentations, but do not have a great deal of time to learn how to use complicated software." However, the evaluators also note that although it is easy to create a multimedia presentation using *mPOWER*, "it is necessary for users to make and insert their own graphics, images, sounds, and video, which requires a significant amount of additional equipment and may be difficult initially for computer novices." *MultiMedia Schools* evaluators conclude that this program is "simple and attractive enough for younger students and yet has the sophistication that older students prefer."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- *MultiMedia Schools*, May/June 1998; *Technology Connection*, September 1997. **Good --** North Carolina Department of Education (*School Library Journal*, June 1995).

Print Shop PressWriter

(CD ROM: WIN95, MAC)

Publisher:
Broderbund

Copyright: 1997

Grade(s): 4-12

Subject(s): Tools
Writing
Language Arts
Creativity

Cost (School Edition): $69.95; Lab Pack $199.95.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 95 or later, 486/66 MHZ or faster, 8MB RAM, 35MB hard drive space, SVGA, 2X CD ROM drive, sound card, printer;
Macintosh 7.1.2 or later, 16MB RAM, 7MB free, 45MB hard drive space, 2X CD-ROM drive or faster, 256 colors.

Magazine Reviews: *Newsweek*, Winter 1997 (Computers & the Family special issue).

Description: *Print Shop PressWriter* is a **publishing tool** that lets students create newsletters, brochures, reports, fliers, booklets, letters, and resumes. An intuitive interface, ready-to-use graphics, simple text editing tools, and more than 125 layouts help students to create their own documents.

Tips: *Technology Connection* evaluators say the QuickStart demos are helpful and suggest that even experienced users should start with these introductions. Additionally, these evaluators liked the included sample teacher documents, such as a library newsletter, a parent brochure, and a classroom booklet. They add, "With step-by-step instructions, you can modify the samples to suit your needs and save the document as a template. Thirty lesson plans use these samples and include activities like writing resumes or making an oral history booklet." *Technology Connection* evaluators conclude, "If you don't have a desktop publisher or if the one you have is hard to use and teach, get this program. It is fun, and your students will have no trouble mastering it."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- Florida Department of Education, 1997/98; *Technology Connection*, February 1998.

Timeliner 4.0

(DISKETTE: MAC, WIN, WIN95)

Publisher:
Tom Snyder Productions

Copyright: 1994

Grade(s): 4-12

Subject(s): Tools
Reference
Social Studies
Science
Language Arts
History

Cost (School Edition): $79.95. Contact publisher for further information.

Hardware Requirements: **Windows** 3.1 or later, 4MB RAM, 256 colors, Windows-compatible sound card; **Macintosh** System 6.07 or higher, 1MB RAM, hard drive or two floppy drives, 256 colors.

Magazine Reviews: *Booklist*, August 1996; The *Computing Teacher*, November 1994; *Science & Children*, February 1995.

Description: The purpose of this **versatile tool program** is to provide a means of creating, merging, editing, and printing time lines of contemporary, future, and historical events. *Timeliner* can now accommodate thousands of entries and be hundred of pages long, using any of the system fonts while providing 10 colors for entry data. The user creates chronological time lines from dates entered in any order and in a variety of formats (i.e., year, month, day, hour, minute, and day of the week). Students have the option of displaying the time lines in banner, compact, list, or table form. The program allows users to add graphics and titles; customize font sizes, styles, and color; and modify the size and style of flags. Custom scales display proportional relationships such as time, size, weight, speed, distance, and temperature. Floating time lines are not anchored to a specific year. Geologic time lines use terms (e.g., 1 million), while custom time lines use identifiers (e.g., degrees and mph). Multiple time lines merge together and create a graphic "snapshot" of any time line that can be exported to another document. Help is accessible from a 60-minute step-by-step tutorial. A variety of sample time lines are available. *Timeliner 4.0* includes a program disk, backup license, sample time lines, a comprehensive Teacher's Guide, lesson plans, and work sheets.

Tips: A reviewer for *Technology Connection* suggests that "students can create a time line of important events in history. Then they can create a family tree time line and merge the two to personalize history."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- Baltimore County (MD) Public Schools, 1996; Developmental Software Awards, 1997; 1997 Fermilab Lederman Science Center, October 1995; *Technology Connection*, January 1996. **Good** -- Jefferson County (CO) Public Schools, 1995/96; ISTE Educational Software Evaluation Consortium, 1997.

Title originally included in *Only the Best*, 1997

Web Workshop

(CD-ROM: MAC/WIN/WIN95; DISKETTE: WIN, MAC)

Publisher:
Sunburst Communications

Copyright: 1996

Grade(s): 1-5

Subject(s): Tools

Cost: $89.95; Lab Pack (5) $179.95; Lab pack (10) $399.95; Site license (25) $599.95.

Hardware Requirements:
Windows 3.1 or later, 486 or faster, 8MB RAM, 23MB hard drive space, 256 colors; **Macintosh** System 7.1 or later, 68040 or faster, 8 MB RAM, 23MB hard drive space, 256 colors.

Magazine Reviews: *Computer Life*, November 1996; *PC Magazine*, December 17, 1996; *Washington Post*, October 30, 1996

Description: This **publishing tool** offers teachers and students an easy way to create Web pages. There is no need to learn HTML or any other programming language. The program uses standard drawing tools for backgrounds and pictures and a text tool for text. Links are added by point and click. To design a page, users select from more than 40 backgrounds or create a background with paint tools. Pictures are supplied from an extensive clip art library or imported. Sound can be added, as well as links to e-mail addresses. A "Link To" button links a page to any site on the Internet. The program automatically creates HTML and JPEG files. It also includes FTP software to post pages to a World Wide Web (WWW) server. Pages can be published with Sunburst for free.

Tips: A *Technology Connection* evaluator calls this program "the perfect way to introduce beginners to the world of Web publishing." Evaluators at *Technology and Learning* note that this program "makes it easy for teachers to incorporate Web sites into their daily lesson plans by allowing them to link to over 40 educationally appropriate home pages." However, North Carolina evaluators warn that "students can't browse the World Wide Web [with this program] to find external links. Instead they have to type the URLs or choose from sites selected by the producer."

Evaluator Conclusions: Excellent -- Florida Department of Education, 1997/98; *Technology Connection*, January 1998. **Good** -- North Carolina Department of Education (*School Library Journal*, June 1997); *Technology and Learning*, November/December 1997.

Apple Computer, Inc.
One Infinite Loop
Cupertino, CA 95014
(800) 624-2926
Fax: (408) 974-1211

Broderbund Software, Inc.
P.O. Box 6125
Novato, CA 94948-6125
(800) 474-8840
(800) 825-4420 (Site Licenses only)
Fax: (415) 382-4419
http://www.broderbund.com/education

Claris Corporation
(FileMaker, Inc.)(see also Apple Computer, Inc.)
Mail Stop C-11, Box 58168
Santa Clara, CA 95052
(800) 325-2747
Fax: (408) 987-3932
http://www.claris.com

Creative Wonders
(See also The Learning Company)
6401 Kaiser Drive
Fremont, CA 94555
(510) 792-2101
http://www.creativewonders.com

Davidson & Associates, Inc.
(See also Knowledge Adventure, Inc.)
19840 Pioneer Avenue
Torrance, CA 90503
(800) 545-7677
(310) 793-0600
Fax: (310) 793-0603

Discovery Channel Multimedia
P.O. Box 2649
Columbus, OH 43216
(800) 762-2189
Fax: (614) 771-7362
http://www.discovery.com

DK Multimedia
95 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10016
(212) 213-4800
(800) 356-6575
Fax: (212) 213-5240
http://www.dk.com

Edmark Corporation
P.O. Box 97021
Redmond, WA 98073-9721
(800) 691-2986
(425) 556-8400
http://www.edmark.com

Educational Insights
16941 Keegan Avenue
Carson, CA 90746
(800) 995-4436
Fax: (310) 605-5048
http://www.edin.com

Gale Research
835 Penobscot Building
645 Giswold Street
Detroit, MI 48226-4094
(800) 877-GALE
(313) 961-2242
Fax: (800) 414-5043
http://www.gale.com

Great Wave Software
5353 Scotts Valley Drive
Scotts Valley, CA 95066
(800) 423-1144 ext.248
Fax: (408) 438-7171
http://www.greatwave.com

Houghton Mifflin Interactive Corporation
120 Beacon Street
Somerville, MA 02143
(800) 829-7962
(617) 503-4800
Fax: (617) 503-4900
http://www.hminet.com

Humongous Entertainment Corporation
13110 N.E. 177th Place
Suite B101, Box 180
Woodinville, WA 98072-9965
(800) 499-8386
(425) 867-2596
Fax: (425) 489-3446
http://www.humongous.com

Infonautics Corporation
900 West Valley Road, Suite 1100
Wayne, PA 19087-1830
(610) 971-8840
Fax: (610) 902-8831

Kaplan Educational Centers
888 Seventh Avenue
New York, NY 10106
(800) KAP-ITEM
http://www.kaplan.com

Knowledge Adventure, Inc.
19840 Pioneer Avenue
Torrance, CA 90503
(310) 793-0600
Fax: (310) 793-0601
http://www.KnowledgeAdventure.com

The Learning Company, Inc.
One Athenaeum Street
Cambridge, MA 02142
(617) 494-1200
Customer Service: (617) 494-5700
Fax: (617) 494-1219
http://www.learningco.com

Maxis
2121 N California Blvd., Suite 600
Walnut Creek, CA 94596
(800) 336-2947
Fax: (510) 927-3581

McGraw-Hill School Interactive
195 Scott Swamp Road
Farmington, CT 06032
(800) 442-9685
(860) 678-1212
(860) 677-5405
http://www.mhschool.com

MECC
(See The Learning Company)

Metropolitan Museum of Art
1000 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10028
1-800-468-7386
http://www.metmuseum.org/

Microsoft Corporation
One Microsoft Way
Redmond, WA 98052-6399
(800) 426-9400
Call for nearest reseller
http://www.microsoft.com

Mindscape, Inc.
(See The Learning Company)

Mitsubishi Chemical Corporation
(see Metropolitan Museum of Art)

Optimum Resource, Inc.
5 Hiltech Lane
Hilton Head, SC 29926
(803) 672-6002
Fax: (803) 689-8008

Pierian Spring Software
5200 SW Macadam Ave., Suite 570
Portland, OR 97201
(800) 213-5054
(503) 222-2044
Fax: (503) 222-0771
http://www.pierian.com
info@pierian.com

Prentice Hall, Inc.
1 Lake Street
Upper Saddle River, NJ 07458
(800) 848-9500
http://www.PHInteractive.com

School Zone Publishing
1819 Industrial Drive, Box 777
Grand Haven, MI 49417
(800) 253-0564
(616) 846-9601
Fax: (616) 864-6181
http://www.schoolzone.com

Sierra On-Line
3380 146th Place, SE
Bellevue, WA 98007
(425) 649-9800
(800) 757-7707
http://www.sierra.com

Simon and Schuster, Inc.
(See Knowledge Adventure)

SkillsBank Corporation
(See also the Learning Company)
7104 Ambassador Road
Baltimore, MD 21244
(800) 725-8432

Steck-Vaughn Company
P.O. Box 690789
Orlando, FL 32819
(800) 531-5015

Sunburst Communications, Inc.
101 Castleton Street
Pleasantville, NY 10570
(800) 321-7511
(914) 747-3310
Fax: (914) 747-4109
http://www.nysunburst.com
service@nysunburst.com

SVE & Churchill Media
6677 N. Northwest Highway
Chicago, IL 60631-1304
(800) 829-1900
Fax: (800) 624-1678
http://www.svemedia.com
customerservice@svemedia.com

Theatrix Interactive, Inc.
1250 45th Street, Suite 350
Emeryville, CA 94608-2924
(800) 795-8749
(510) 658-2800
Fax: (510) 658-2827
http://www.theatrix.com

Tom Snyder Productions
80 Coolidge Hill Road
Watertown, MA 02172
(800) 342-0236
(617) 926-6000
Fax: (617) 926-6222
http://www.teachtsp.com
ask@teachtsp.com

Troll Communications
100 Corporate Drive
Mahawah, NJ 07430
(800) 929-8765
Fax: (800) 979-8765
http://www.troll.com

Voyager Company
(Learn Technologies Interactive)
361 Broadway, Suite 600
New York, NY 10013
(888) 292-5584
Fax: (802) 864-9846
http://voyager.learntech.com

Interdisciplinary Index

HOW TO USE THIS INDEX

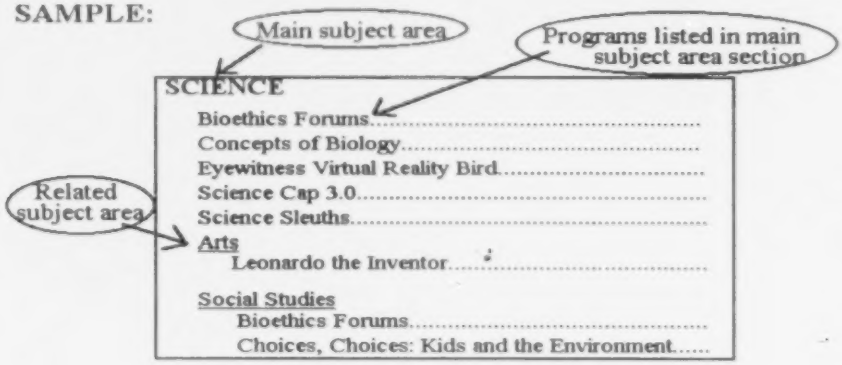
This index can be used as a subject area index as well as an interdisciplinary index. **To find programs listed in a particular subject area section:**

- Look under the subject area in bold print.
- Find the list of programs above the first underlined related subject area.

To find programs that are interdisciplinary:

- Find your subject area in bold print.
- Below the main subject area, look for a related subject area with an underline.
- Listed are programs that can be used in both the bold subject area and the underlined related subject area.

SAMPLE:



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Founded in 1943, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development is a nonpartisan, nonprofit, education association, with international headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia. ASCD's mission statement: *ASCD, a diverse, international community of educators, forging covenants in teaching and learning for the success of all learners.*

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ASCD provides many services to educators--prekindergarten through grade 12--as well as to others in the education community, including parents, school board members, administrators, university professors, and students. For further information, contact ASCD via telephone: (800) 933-2723 or 703-578-9600; fax: 703-575-5400; or Internet: www.ascd.org. Or write to ASCD, Information Services, 1703 N. Beauregard Street, Alexandria Virginia 22311-1714.

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